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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Kellogg Pact and the Fifteen Cruiser Bill are both before the United States Senate. One party in that body is zealous for ratification of the Pact, and indulges hopes that, when the Pact is ratified, it will be possible to reduce considerably the programme of cruiser construction. Another group is prepared to go all out for the Cruiser Bill as it stands, and, partly for that reason, is hostile, or at least lukewarm, towards the Pact. In addition, there are many Senators who see no inconsistency between the two measures and are genuinely in favour of both. The first round of the struggle went to Senator Borah, who is in charge of the Pact. The Big Navy Group would seem to have over-reached themselves by their appearance of hostility to ratification, and, under pressure from the Administration, and from public opinion, Senator Hale, the Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, consented merely to introduce his Bill, and to defer the debate upon it until the Pact had been disposed of. Issue was then joined on the question of reservations. The attempt of Senator Moses, and others, to secure a concurrent resolution embodying American reservations, more particularly with regard to the Monroe Doctrine, has hitherto failed; but its failure has prevented any agreement between Senator Borah and his opponents, and the debate seems likely to drag on for some time, with the result that it is very doubtful whether the Cruiser Bill can be passed during the present session.

* * *

Two or three points of special interest emerge from the debates. There is no doubt that the British reservations, especially the so-called "British Monroe Doc-

trine," have stiffened the opposition to ratification without some formal reassertion of the Monroe Doctrine itself. On the other hand, Senator Borah has been driven to the assertion that the Monroe Doctrine has been "wrenched from its original moorings," and a suggestion that he would like to see it stripped of some of its later accretions. The next significant feature of the debates, however, is the revelation of an uneasy suspicion among critics of the Pact that, despite the total absence of sanctions under the Pact itself, the United States may, in practice, be driven to discriminate, in its assertion of neutral rights, against a State committing a flagrant act of aggression, such as a breach of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The whole course of the discussion confirms the opinion that, while the Treaty will probably be ratified without reservations, the value it ultimately assumes will depend on the effect made on American opinion by the attitude of the European Powers with regard to peace, disarmament, and international law, during the next few years.

* * *

King Alexander has abolished the Yugoslav Constitution and substituted a form of government in which all executive power is vested in himself. These measures have, however, been taken, under the implication that they constitute no more than a provisional arrangement for overcoming a crisis which threatened to divide the country. The crisis was certainly acute. The Croatian deputies, strongly supported by M. Privitchevitch's Serbian party, refused to attend the Skupshtina, and were bringing governmental administration in their country to a standstill. They were, however, willing to discuss and confer with a temporary

non-party Cabinet, on the understanding that all decisions reached in conference should be submitted to the electorate. The Government parties refused the proposals, and were as little willing to agree to discussion as to dissolution. The deadlock was absolute, and there is a great deal of substance in the King's contention that the parliamentary machinery has ceased to work, and that some substitute must be found for it, if Yugoslavia is to have a Government which governs at all.

* * *

The provisional Cabinet formed by the King can fairly be called neutral. Three of the Ministers are Croats, although they do not represent the Croat party leaders; the Bosnians are represented, and Father Koroshetz, the ex-Premier and leader of the Slovene Clericals, has been made Minister of Communications. The King's choice of a Premier is, however, open to criticism. General Pera Zhivkovitch is a fine soldier, but everything that is known of him suggests that he is a man who has earned the King's respect more by honesty and energy than by the qualities which are likely to be useful in the present crisis. A Premier who has to reform a Constitution in times of agitation and trouble should be a man who can distinguish what is strong and earnest from what is vociferous and volatile in public opinion, and as far as one can judge, Pera Zhivkovitch is no more than a capable and hard-working general officer. Still, his case should not be prejudged. Marshal von Hindenburg had few qualifications for the office that he has filled so admirably.

* * *

The first acts of the provisional Government have been in the nature of elaborate precautions against disturbance, or criticism likely to lead to disturbance. A proclamation has been issued threatening individuals and corporate bodies with immense penalties, if they attempt to change the existing regime. No new political party may be formed and no political meeting held, unless the Government gives permission. Newspapers will be confiscated if they express "hatred of the State as a whole or confessional and tribal controversies" (*anglice* if they criticize the authorities). General Pera Zhivkovitch and his colleagues evidently dislike interruptions. It is not easy to decide outright whether these drastic regulations will prove helpful or dangerous. Unrestrained controversy has done the Serbs no good. A Lenten abstinence from provocative language might conceivably make the nation more reasonable. On the other hand, a Government whose task is to pacify a divided nation, by giving the discontented sections what they want, is heading for danger when it chokes the ventilation pipes of public opinion. No section will receive all that it asks for under any settlement; and those who have to calculate the approximations to extreme demands which will be acceptable, must have some means of ascertaining what will be accepted and what refused.

* * *

The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, the trade-union association in our iron and steel industry, has sent a letter to the Prime Minister urging the appointment of a Royal Commission, or other competent Committee, to inquire into the condition of the industry. The letter expressly suggests that the inquiry should be conducted "with special reference to the nature of the competition in the home market," which is clearly intended to mean that the question of Safeguarding should be the main theme of the inquiry. Though the demand for an inquiry is formally non-committal, it clearly marks an important change in the attitude of the Confederation to Safeguarding.

Hitherto, though some of its leaders have favoured Safeguarding, the Confederation as a body has been opposed to it. The request for an inquiry at least contemplates the possibility of abandoning that opposition. The Confederation leaders have shown themselves fully alive to the political importance of the step which they have taken; for, before forwarding their request to the Prime Minister, they informed the Parliamentary Labour Party of their intention, and received the assurance that the Party would not oppose a thorough and impartial inquiry. And, indeed, for a really thorough and impartial inquiry there is much to be said.

* * *

Though the general wages question is in abeyance in Lancashire, there is danger of serious trouble over the minor question of cleaning and oiling time. The present arrangements concerning the cleaning and oiling of cotton spinning machinery have continued without alteration for the last ten years, but the employers have long been dissatisfied with the results, and have suggested various changes. At the end of last year the employers made definite proposals to the operatives to reorganize the work of cleaning and oiling, but the latter regarded the proposals as inimical to their interests and suggested that a system of cleaning gangs should be introduced instead. The employers' representatives have now considered the operatives' suggestions with a view to arriving at a compromise, but, this having been found impossible, the employers' representatives have tendered notice to withdraw from all cleaning and oiling agreements within a month, after which time each individual firm will be able to enter into new agreements with the operatives. The workers' leaders, however, have replied that they are determined to resist any encroachment on present conditions of work, and that a strike will take place at any mill which attempts to introduce different conditions.

* * *

General Hertzog has announced that the South African Government will fight the General Election this year with the native question as the main issue. This public declaration that he has abandoned all hope of an agreed native policy is a retrograde step in South African politics, and is the more unfortunate in that his speech, which dealt with the alleged threat of the blacks to white civilization in South Africa, can be interpreted as forecasting a policy of sheer repression. His pronouncement has caused dismay among Dutch as well as English-speaking South Africans, and it is very doubtful whether the Nationalists will gain—while South Africa as a whole will certainly lose—by his decision to drag this most difficult and most important problem into the arena of party politics.

* * *

General Hertzog seems likely to sustain a rebuff on another issue. A new commercial treaty was recently concluded between the German and South African Governments by which most-favoured-nation treatment would be extended to German goods in respect of any future preferences granted to Great Britain. By a Protocol annexed to the Treaty it was also proposed to take the same action with respect to the present preferences granted to certain Empire products, if and when it is decided to extend them to other Empire countries. In reply to a cable from the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce, the London Chamber of Commerce has protested strongly against the treaty, as an attempt to undermine the whole system of Imperial Preference, and equally strong opposition has developed, in many quarters, in South Africa itself, where critics of the treaty have been quick to represent it as another example of the Nationalist Party's veiled

separatist tendencies. It is now rumoured that the Government will either withdraw the treaty, or have it considerably amended before it is put forward for ratification.

* * *

The representatives of twenty American Republics, assembled at the Pan-American Conference, have signed a general treaty on arbitration and a general convention on conciliation within the Western hemisphere. The arbitration treaty excludes from its scope only domestic questions and those affecting third parties; but it provides that each country may specify its individual reservations, and it is believed that a large proportion of the South American States will take advantage of this provision to exclude from the operation of treaty questions arising from disputes whose origin was anterior to the treaty itself. This, of course, would exclude the Tacna-Arica question, and the unsettled boundary questions which have for so long embittered the relations of South American States. There is a reservation, in which several States are likely to follow Colombia, of questions which have already been decided by local Courts, unless it can be shown that there has been denial of justice. Finally, it is not clear that the United States Senate will ratify the treaty without the reservation, on which it has previously insisted, providing for Senatorial approval in respect of each case as it arises, before it can be submitted to an arbitrator. At best, the Treaty can only be regarded as a first step towards a "Locarno of the New World"; but first steps are important.

* * *

The coal delegation at Geneva, under the auspices of the League of Nations, has taken upon itself a task of great importance to the world at large and to Great Britain in particular. The delegates and their expert assistants, the latter of whom have been selected by the League Economic Committee, will examine such problems as the relation between the use of coal and other sources of energy; the possibility of further developments in coal utilization; the relations between production and demand; the effects of Customs and import and export regulations on production, transport, and distribution; and the effects of price control on consumption. The British representative is Sir Sydney Chapman, Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade, with Sir John Hindley, vice-chairman of Messrs. Stevenson, Clark & Co., and commercial adviser to the Mining Department, as his expert adviser. The pooling of knowledge and opinions on marketing methods and on recent research in connection with more economical methods of coal utilization is an obviously desirable step, and while it would be foolish to hope too much, in the present conditions of the coal industry, from the results of the inquiry, the proceedings of the delegation will be followed, in this country at least, with interest and anxiety.

* * *

In the meantime, some small ray of hope for the industry may be drawn from the efforts of shipowners to devise a more economical method of using coal for bunkers, either by better methods of stoking, by improvements in engines and boilers, or by the use of powdered or pulverized coal. Bunkers, of course, are only a minor factor of the coal problem; but the quantities so shipped at British ports during the three years before the war varied from 18 to 21 million tons. In 1925, the figure was down to 16 millions, and its present tendency is to diminish every year. At least equally serious is the diminution in shipments to the bunker ports abroad. There is little question that, for warships and passenger liners, oil fuel has come to

stay; but on the high authority of Sir Eustace d'Eyncourt, recent experiments have greatly increased the power of coal to compete with oil as a fuel for cargo-carrying ships, and any further developments in this direction will be a boon both to the coal industry and to British shipping.

* * *

It was proper and fitting that the French Government and the Army should send high representatives to the funeral of the ex-Grand Duke and Russian Commander-in-Chief, Nicholas Nicolaievitch. The Grand Duke commanded the Russian armies during the first successes against the Austrians in 1914, and during the Russian disasters of the following year; and it is admitted by all that, whenever practicable, his strategy was inspired by the highly honourable motive of giving relief to his French allies. As a General he had great abilities; he co-ordinated the movements which carried the Russian armies right up to the Carpathian passes in 1914; and later, it was he who drove the Turks out of the Caucasus and captured Erzerum. He was considered partly responsible for the inadequacy of the Russian munition factories; but this was a fault which every high military authority in Europe committed. As a human being he was a Suvasoff, with a more courtly bearing; and if he had commanded the Russian armies at a period in which his own religious zeal, love of field masses and ikons, was shared by the Russian troopers, he would probably have been the most popular general that has ever lived. It should be said also, that if his high notions of military honour entitled him to the gratitude of the allied generals in 1914, his admirable bearing in adversity entitled him to the respect of everybody.

* * *

Though England only won the Third Test Match after a close and exciting struggle, the course of the game suggested as strongly as the two previous run-away victories that the present English team is definitely stronger than any which Australia can produce. For on this occasion, unlike the previous two, Australia had what luck was going. Australia won the toss, Larwood injured his ankle, and England had to begin her second innings on a sticky wicket. The feature of the match was the way in which Hobbs and Sutcliffe surmounted this last difficulty, putting on over one hundred runs for the first wicket. This performance is the more remarkable for not being unprecedented. For the last preceding occasion on which Hobbs and Sutcliffe put up over one hundred together in a Test Match was on a sticky wicket at the Oval in 1926. The fact that England has now won the "rubber" is not likely to detract appreciably from the interest of the two Test Matches which remain. The English team will be eager to compensate for the humiliations of previous tours by a clean sweep of all five matches. And the Australians will be no less eager to prevent this.

* * *

Those who had the opportunity of witnessing the entertaining "revue," entitled "Vespers," at last year's Liberal Summer School, will welcome the appearance of "Verses for Various Occasions," by Mr. Hubert Phillips, which has just been issued, at the very moderate price of 6d., by the Liberal Publication Department. For this booklet contains some half-dozen of the songs from "Vespers," together with other verse in the same vein of political satire, some of which has appeared in our columns. "How Do You Like Our Formula?" (a skit on Mr. Chamberlain's rating formula) will be particularly apposite during the coming session.

THE B.B.C. AS PUBLISHER

THE agitation which has arisen over the new rôle which the B.B.C. proposes to assume as publisher represents clearly only the beginning of a prolonged controversy. The issues which are raised are important and far-reaching, and are not less so because the B.B.C. had apparently no intention of raising them.

Some weeks ago, the B.B.C. announced that it proposed to issue a weekly journal, to be entitled *THE LISTENER*, the first number of which is to appear on January 16th. It was made clear that its staple feature would be the publication of broadcast talks; but it was emphasized that the new journal would not be confined to this purpose, but would "contain original articles covering all the serious interests of the listening public," including, besides literature and the drama, such matters as dress, bridge, and chess. Upon this announcement, the various newspaper and publishing organizations got together, sent a protest to the Postmaster-General, and asked for an interview. The Postmaster-General replied by referring to Clause 3 of the B.B.C.'s charter, which entitles it to publish anything which "may seem conducive to any of the objects of the Corporation," and refused the request for an interview. This attitude he has maintained, despite further pressure. The publishing organizations have accordingly turned to the Prime Minister and asked him to receive them.

Meanwhile, the B.B.C. has been busy issuing explanatory statements as to the character and objects of its new undertaking. Its main function is to replace the "Aids to Study" pamphlets which the B.B.C. now issues. The desirability of a weekly journal for this purpose was expressly recommended by a Committee presided over by Sir Henry Hadow. The great bulk of the contents of the *LISTENER* will be broadcast matter; the whole of them will be of a character the object is not to compete with existing weekly journals, but to promote "adult education."

With every desire to be fair to the B.B.C., we find these assurances distinctly disingenuous. The elevation of the B.B.C.'s motives is entirely beside the point. The competition of the *LISTENER* with other journals will not be the less real or keen because it is designed as a contribution to "adult education"; for, in a loose sense of the term, adult education is the function which most papers endeavour to discharge; and it is in this loose sense that the B.B.C. authorities appear to use the term. Like the Postmaster-General, we have examined the dummy specimen of the new paper; and it is manifest at once that the *LISTENER* has been shaped so as to resemble as closely as possible an ordinary literary weekly. In general appearance, paper, type, &c., it resembles a sixpenny weekly; the front page, for instance, with its four lines of "Principal Contents," is almost exactly like our own. But in the more important matter of the character of its contents (as well as in its price, which is twopence), it approximates very closely to papers like *JOHN O' LONDON'S WEEKLY* or *T.P.'s* and *CASSELL'S WEEKLY*. It is clearly designed to make the same sort of appeal that those papers make; it is educational in the same sense that they are educational, and in no other way. And, of course, it will compete with them; whether seriously or not depending on how attractive those responsible for the *LISTENER* can succeed in making it.

This conclusion is in no way affected by the fact

that the greater part of the contents of the *LISTENER* will be extracts from broadcast talks. The B.B.C. will hardly argue that its talks never make good reading matter. If it is doing its primary job competently, it is clear that these talks given week by week over the microphone ought to comprise enough good "copy" to form the staple material of an interesting weekly paper; and this, as is made perfectly clear by the dummy specimen, is the conception on which the *LISTENER* is based. The extracts from the talks are selected, arranged, presented, and illustrated, not with an austere eye to their educational importance (we have such features as "Furnishing the Small Flat" and "Recipes for Small Cakes"), but with a view to making a varied and readable paper, which, it is clearly hoped, will be bought and read for its own sake, as other papers are. Of course, if the *LISTENER* were to be confined solely to extracts from talks, the best editing in the world could not make it really attractive. It would then lack the vital qualities of character and personality. But a moderate amount of specially written matter should be enough to supply this deficiency; and this presumably is the main rôle which the "original articles" are intended to fulfil.

We do not, therefore, attach cardinal importance to the question of whether these "original articles" are to be many or few. But the fact that the B.B.C. speaks with two voices on this matter is none the less instructive. In appealing to the advertising world, the B.B.C. lays great stress on the feature of the original articles. In reassuring the publishing world, it minimizes them. This difference of emphasis is, of course, quite easy to understand. The advertising manager naturally stresses those features which are likely to appeal to advertisers; and it may well be that he has somewhat overstressed them. It would be only human. Precisely. But note that it is the features characteristic of an ordinary weekly that the advertisement manager is tempted to overstress. The editor, moreover, will be actuated by the same motive. He will be anxious to please his readers and to extend his circulation. And, if he can best please his readers by increasing the proportion of original matter, and by making the paper an ever closer imitation of an ordinary popular weekly, it will again be only human if he strives to do so. At first, no doubt, in view of the agitation that has arisen, some attempt will be made to hold him in leash; but, since there is no very clear line between a small amount and a considerable amount of original matter, or between matter that is "designed to strengthen the broadcasting service" and matter that is not, the attempt is not likely to be effective for very long.

However this may be, the *LISTENER* is, in its whole conception, quite clearly competitive with existing journalistic enterprise; and the attempt of the B.B.C. to explain it away as merely a sort of weekly binding together of its "Aids to Study" pamphlets seems to us as disingenuous as any official *apologia* that has ever emanated from a Government Department, which is saying a good deal. We come then to the important question. Is it legitimate for the B.B.C. to enter the field of competitive journalism? The protest of the publishing organizations is based on the ground of "unfair competition." With its statutory monopoly of broadcasting, the B.B.C. has unique advantages for "pushing" a literary venture of its own. Night after night, the announcers can, and presumably will, bring the *LISTENER* to the attention of the public. With these resources of gratuitous publicity, it will clearly be easy for the B.B.C. to obtain a large circulation

and a large advertising revenue for even a very inferior journal. And this must be partly, if not mainly, at the expense of the circulations and the advertising revenues of the papers which it most resembles.

But that is not all. The B.B.C. is not only a statutory monopoly. It is a public corporation. It is controlled by Commissioners who are appointed by the Government. It is, in other words, a semi-official institution. And the propriety of a semi-official institution indulging in competitive journalistic enterprise is open to question, quite apart from the point of unfair competition. If the LISTENER is established and proves a success, the B.B.C. will have at its disposal a powerful organ for influencing opinion, which it is not likely to refrain from using when its interests or its policy are challenged. British tradition forbids any Government Department to maintain such an organ. Our official publications must be bald, colourless, and purely informative, like the BOARD OF TRADE JOURNAL or the MINISTRY OF LABOUR GAZETTE. This tradition is rooted in a desire to limit the influence of officialdom. It may be hardly less important to limit the influence of the semi-officialdom of the B.B.C.

Now we have no desire to press these points unduly far. We have a sincere respect for the B.B.C., and for the tradition which it has established. We do not want to see it confined to a pedantically narrow interpretation of its functions, or subjected to the deadening traditions of a Whitehall Department. We think it important that those charged with the development of a still very young service of great potentialities should have the freedom of action which makes for experiment and enterprise. But there is no surer way of losing freedom than to abuse it. The project of the LISTENER is a gross and flagrant abuse of the powers conferred on the B.B.C. by its present charter.

THE "GAZETTE DU FRANC"

THE affair of the GAZETTE DU FRANC is in itself a banal one. A lady called Madame Hanau, who ran what appears to have been a glorified bucket-shop, has been arrested together with an assortment of her alleged accomplices, and all are being tried by newspaper in the approved French fashion, with the zealous co-operation of the *juge d'instruction*, or examining magistrate, who seems to be enjoying himself immensely. French law, quite logically, lays down that, an *instruction* being secret, no information about what passes at it must be published, but laws in France are made to be broken and, as in all such cases, columns of the papers are filled with tendentious reports of the proceedings, evidently supplied by the examining magistrate, for no reporters are admitted. The examining magistrate has also supplied the Press with portraits of himself accompanied by laudatory biographical notices, and interviews in which he assures the public that he is "thinking of France," and of "the wretches who must be hunted down," that is, the accused persons whom even French law assumes to be innocent until they are proved guilty. In short, the staging of the first act follows the most approved methods.

An attempt has, however, been made in France to turn the financial scandal into a political and even an international one. It has been described as "another Panama," the very existence of the Republican regime has been declared to be at stake, and exceptionally perspicacious persons have detected in it the hands of the Boche and the Bolshevik pursuing dark designs for the ruin of France. For it is an accepted axiom that, if there is anything amiss

in France, there is some wicked foreigner at the bottom of it, or at least that mysterious abstraction "international finance." All this nonsense is as normal as the affair itself, which is interesting just because it is typical. It is true that the affair of the GAZETTE DU FRANC touches both politics and the Press, but so has every financial scandal in France of any importance since Louis XIV. Corruption of politicians and the Press has not been the monopoly of any political regime, and the Third Republic is certainly no worse in this respect than any of the regimes that preceded it, but in the nature of things it is less successful in hushing things up and preventing public scandals than were more autocratic forms of government. There has never been more corruption in France than there was under Napoleon I., but it was concealed from the public eye. One of the causes of corruption under the Third Republic is the survival of the centralized and autocratic Napoleonic system of administration, which also still enables a certain amount of hushing-up and of Government interference with the course of justice in the interest of influential and privileged persons.

The GAZETTE DU FRANC was founded as a weekly paper three or four years ago by the Count de Courville, an ardent Royalist and prominent member of the Action Française League, well known in Parisian society, who is now in the Santé prison with the other male accused. His purpose was to save the franc, but the enterprise did not meet with success, and the paper was soon in financial difficulties. M. de Courville went in search of additional capital and was introduced to Madame Hanau, who provided the necessary money and used the paper to boom her financial enterprises. They seem chiefly to have consisted in gambling on the Stock Exchange for clients with money entrusted to her by them for that purpose, but she founded various companies with obscure objects, the original shareholders being men of straw, who gave merely their names, Madame Hanau providing the money. M. de Courville on his own admission acted in that capacity. At the beginning of last year, M. Pierre Audibert became editor of the paper. He had been *chef-de-cabinet* to M. de Monzie, when the latter was a Minister, and had thus valuable relations in high quarters. The title of the paper was changed to GAZETTE DU FRANC ET DES NATIONS, it became a daily and started a vigorous propaganda for peace and international reconciliation. M. Audibert had an editorial salary of 30,000 francs a month—£2,880 a year—a liberal one for a paper run at a heavy loss, and printing 60,000 copies, most of which were given away. He had, according to his own account, a perfectly free hand on the editorial side, but Madame Hanau continued to direct the financial section of the paper. Payments to contributors were on as generous a scale as the editorial salary—a fee of £40 for an article was, I understand, quite ordinary, and more was often paid. Naturally the paper secured a large and varied selection of distinguished contributors. An article by M. Briand appeared in its first daily number, and among those who subsequently contributed articles were M. Poincaré, Signor Mussolini, and the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris. Some of those asked for contributions, however—M. Cail- laux was one—declined, perhaps because they had read the financial articles in the paper, which had no doubt escaped the notice of the others.

It is undoubtedly unfortunate that the Prime Minister of France and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, not to mention less eminent politicians, should have contributed to a paper run, as it now appears, simply to advertise financial enterprises that have landed their promoters in a criminal prosecution. The fact is an example of the levity that prevails in the *République des Camarades*. French poli-

ticians are too ready to do any service that costs them nothing to a political friend. The eminent politicians concerned were let in by M. Audibert, whose invitation they at once accepted without inquiry because he was one of themselves. Nevertheless, their imprudence is not going to put the Republic in any danger. The hysterical shrieks of the ACTION FRANÇAISE, the Fascist LIBERTÉ, and M. Coty's AMI DU PEUPLE are falling very flat. People see that, if the Republic is compromised by M. Poincaré's article in the GAZETTE DU FRANC, so is the Catholic Church by that of Cardinal Dubois, and still more the Action Française League by the direct collaboration of M. de Courville in Mme. Hanau's enterprises. It is all very well for M. Maurras to say that the Republic is a party, and is therefore compromised by the conduct of individual Republicans, whereas the Monarchy is a Thing and cannot therefore be touched by the conduct of individual Royalists. This fine distinction does not go down. Moreover, M. Valois, formerly a prominent member of the Royalist Executive, has been making in the VOLONTÉ revelations about the financial methods of the ACTION FRANÇAISE itself, which has replied only with abuse. In particular he has accused the ACTION FRANÇAISE of having vituperated M. Coty until the latter forked out a large sum of money. It is the fact that M. Coty was at one time violently attacked in the ACTION FRANÇAISE, and one day the attacks suddenly ceased, but there may, of course, be some other explanation, although none has been offered.

The AMI DU PEUPLE is in an equally false position. It tries to exploit the affair of the GAZETTE DU FRANC against the Radicals, although, so far as I know, no Radical leader ever contributed to the paper, and, while it holds M. Poincaré morally blameless, as no doubt he is, it demands the arrest of M. de Monzie, because M. Audibert was once his official secretary. As for the LIBERTÉ, it has published the grotesque fiction that M. Herriot, when he was Minister of Public Instruction, subscribed, out of the public funds, for a large number of copies of the GAZETTE DU FRANC for daily distribution in the schools, and on the strength of it demands his arrest. The truth is that M. Herriot accepted for that purpose many thousands of copies of a special number of the GAZETTE published to commemorate the signature of the Kellogg Pact, which were offered gratuitously by the proprietors of the paper. Thanks to the dilatory habits of the Administration, they had not been distributed in Paris at the time of Mme. Hanau's arrest, and were still lying in the offices at the Hôtel de Ville the other day. M. Herriot can hardly be severely blamed for accepting copies of a paper to which his Prime Minister had contributed.

There may be Members of Parliament guiltily implicated in the affair, but up to now there is not a vestige of evidence of it, so I do not see why the Parliamentary system should be discredited by it. Besides, the Parliamentary system has been discredited in France, according to nine out of ten Frenchmen, as long as I can remember, but it is none the worse for it. The army is perhaps the only French national institution that is not discredited, and I suspect that this has always been so. Sometimes I am tempted to think that the army is the only generally accepted national institution possible in France. The Socialist and Communist papers are, of course, saying that what is discredited is the capitalist system, and really there is more to be said for that view than for the others mentioned, although corruption is much older than the capitalist system.

Three other newspapers are implicated in the affair, namely, the QUOTIDIEN, the RÉVEIL DU NORD, and a mid-day paper called the RUMEUR. They sold what is called

their "financial publicity" to Mme. Hanau; in other words, they allowed her to act as their City editor and she paid them for the privilege. It is admitted that the QUOTIDIEN distributed her circulars to its subscribers, who are just the sort of people to whom her enterprises would appeal, being mainly small bourgeois and peasants. For the very people in France so suspicious that they will not entrust their money to the Government Savings Bank, and keep it under their beds or in the cellar, are always ready to entrust it to any speculator or company promoter promising them 10 per cent. It is not really surprising, for, when one suspects everybody, one is sure to end in being unable to distinguish between an honest man and a knave. If any Parliamentarians have any responsibility in this affair, they are two members of M. Poincaré's Cabinet, M. Jean Hennessy and M. Loucheur, who hold the controlling interest in the QUOTIDIEN and the RÉVEIL DU NORD respectively. I do not for a moment suggest that they were cognizant of Mme. Hanau's methods, but they cannot be acquitted of negligence, and are certainly more directly involved than if they had merely contributed an article to the paper or distributed copies of a special number. M. Hennessy in particular should have made inquiries when he became the chief proprietor of the QUOTIDIEN, seeing that the principal political contributors to that paper, including the late Professor Aulard, left it in a body a couple of years ago on account of its financial connections, against which they publicly protested. Yet nobody, except the HUMANITÉ and the POPULAIRE, even mentions M. Hennessy and M. Loucheur—because they are members of M. Poincaré's Cabinet, and therefore covered by that august name.

The truth is that if M. Hennessy and M. Loucheur had known that the papers in which they were respectively interested farmed out their "financial publicity"—and it is difficult to believe that they did not know it—they would have thought nothing of it, because all, or nearly all, French papers do likewise. English papers pay a City editor to give them financial information. French papers are paid by somebody to allow him to use their columns for his financial information. It is notorious that a certain big bank has a large interest in one of the Parisian dailies, and it is safe to say that financial enterprises in which that bank is interested are favourably mentioned in the financial article. No doubt they are sounder than Mme. Hanau's enterprises seem to have been, but the principle is the same. The "financial publicity" is a recognized source of income to the French Press. There are far too many papers in Paris, and very few of them can live by the revenue from their sales and honest advertisements. They live by subsidies or by various expedients. There is little genuine advertising in France. Advertisement usually takes the form of puffs in the news columns. Financial information is not the only information that is a source of revenue. Much of the foreign news in French papers is propaganda paid for by foreign Governments. With a certain amount of experience one can nearly always detect it. M. Briand has organized a system of grants to the Press out of the Secret Service funds. They vary, according to the importance of the paper, from about £240 a year to ten times that amount. This helps to explain the unanimity of the Press on questions of foreign policy.

So there is nothing unusual in the fact that the papers in which M. Hennessy and M. Loucheur are interested farmed out their financial columns. They have merely been unusually unlucky in farming them out to a lady who has got into trouble, perhaps after all for doing nothing much worse than is done with impunity by highly respected and decorated persons.

A scandal of this sort might do good if, instead of being made the occasion of more or less hypocritical denunciations of individuals and being exploited for purposes of party politics, it were recognized as what it is—a symptom of deep-seated evils whose causes are quite independent of the political regime.

ROBERT DELL.

THE TYRANNY OF LONGHAND

BY AN OLD JOURNALIST.

THERE was recorded the other day the death, at the age of 91, of W. H. Gurney Salter, for forty years official Shorthand-writer to the Houses of Parliament. The event, I doubt not, is being noted by stenographers of the elder generation throughout the English-speaking world, but by very few others. I am writing about him here for two reasons: first, because of the unique record of the family to which he belonged and the interest of their specialty to all penmen; and secondly, in order to suggest that the passing of this unobtrusive but notable veteran should be made the occasion of some downright thinking, by all of us, upon one of the strangest tyrannies under which civilized mankind is, seemingly, content to suffer—the tyranny of Longhand writing.

William Henry Gurney Salter was the son of a Baptist minister, and was educated (like Lord Cozens-Hardy, sometime Master of the Rolls, and Mr. Augustine Birrell) at Amersham School. At the age of twenty-two he entered the family office of W. B. Gurney & Sons in Westminster. That was seventy years ago, at which time his uncle, Joseph Gurney, was head of the firm and official Shorthand-writer to both Houses of Parliament. In 1872 Mr. Gurney Salter succeeded to that post, and he held it until his retirement in 1913, the centennial year of the appointment of his grandfather to the office which became hereditary upon the singular ground of merit and experience. But the annals of the Gurney family in this special field of public service did not begin in 1813. So long before that as 1737 Thomas Gurney had been appointed Shorthand-writer to the Old Bailey, and in 1740 he had published his manual of "Brachygraphy." This term—used in 1590 by Peter Bales for his "Arte of Short, Swift, and Secret Writing"—is, of course, the precise equivalent of "shorthand," though obviously less convenient than "stenography." Thomas Gurney simplified a system that had been devised by William Mason, and called "La Plume Volante" (1672), and Mason's is said to be the best of the twenty-five systems of shorthand which, stimulated by the importance of the State Trials and the insatiable appetite of seventeenth-century England for sermons, appeared at frequent intervals from the end of the Elizabethan age. The first Gurney reduced Mason's 420 signs to about 100, and later members of the family made further, though not numerous, improvements. The Gurneys reported most of the *causes célèbres* of the eighteenth century, and Joseph, second of the dynasty, attended almost every sitting of the Warren Hastings trial during the five years of its weary length. His verbatim notes have been preserved and are still legible, including those of the speeches of Sheridan and Burke, both of them said to be so rapid that no shorthand writer could cope with them. The reader who is interested in such things may be referred to a brief "History of the Gurney System," by W. H. Gurney Salter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 8s.), in which a specimen of the Hastings Trial report is reproduced. This fascinating little book has a foreword by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, who says that in his own early life the Gurney shorthand "practically held the

field." The greatest distinction of the system is that it held its own in Parliament down to the days of the establishment of the complete official Hansard, that it still flourishes in the Lords, and that Mr. Walter Hodgson, the present head of the Parliamentary reporting staff, is a Gurney writer.

"The Gurneys were excellent writers of a cumbrous system," says a not wholly impartial authority in the "Encyclopædia Britannica." The Gurney system is admittedly incomplete. That is to say, it does not provide for all needs and emergencies; it makes no claim, as do the modern systems of phonography, to cover the whole of English speech. But "cumbrous" is surely almost the last word that a careful critic would use in this connection. Myself, I do not know it; but I have examined its elements, and I can give the emphatic testimony of a well-known London editor, who has practised and at intervals taught it for forty years. He tells me that the learning of Gurney's principles occupied him, as a lad in his teens, for not more than a few half-days; that time and again he has taught the elements to boys and girls in about two hours; that he attained an easy speed of one hundred words a minute after a short period of practice; that in his youth he took verbatim the great political speakers and preachers, from Gladstone to Spurgeon; and that although in recent years he may not have recourse to it more than twice or thrice a year, he can and does still use it without difficulty. My friend, moreover, asserts that he has never known a boy of sixteen or seventeen, taught phonography at school, who had learnt enough to be passably useful in an office without going through the always crushing grind of a shorthand institute. Which brings me to my point in respect of the tyranny aforesaid.

Why, I ask, should any modern people continue to bear the outrageous burden of longhand? Writing is the greatest of all human inventions. We have always been told so, and we need not deny it. But the perpetuation of the primitive form of writing, from age to age among so-called advanced peoples, is surely a grotesque failure of our civilization. That civilization is founded on the written word. Outside the armies of the manual workers, men and women earn their living largely by it, and the young of all ages have pen or pencil in hand for half the time. Mr. J. A. Spender gives two thousand words a day as a fair allowance for a journalist. There are millions of clerks and other workers in offices who write more than that. Three-fifths of their toil is sheer waste. Our schools and colleges depend, and will continue to depend, upon lessons and lectures that call for note-taking by the victims. In five hundred years of scholastic education not a single step has been taken towards providing the student with a script that would enable him to keep pace with his instructor or reduce to a decent minimum the labour of making notes on the books he has to plough through. We all know what happens. But very few among us seem to realize that the survival of longhand is a humiliation.

In our ordinary intercourse, I suppose, we make use of perhaps one thousand words. At least half of these are needed throughout the working day, and, save for the ampersand every time we write them we spell them out. The note-taker, student or other, may employ a dozen contractions of the commonest and longest words. These are, all told, a merely infantile evasion of the difficulty. And yet there is no reason in the world why we should not, straightway, devise a scheme of abbreviated English, made up of greatly shortened words and symbols easily memorized, teach it in the elementary schools, and establish it, not only as a means of individual labour-saving, but as a medium of exchange in business, professional, and public

life. Systems of shorthand, for three hundred years, have created difficulties through the search for high speed and completeness, neither of which is a prime necessity. The universal need is, I submit, twofold: first, a cursive longhand script, that should be rigorously taught; and secondly, a method of simple abbreviated writing, to be mastered in childhood. One point seems to me essential. It must be based upon the alphabet; for the next invention of consequence in this sphere will be a noiseless typewriter that will fit into an attaché case.

LIFE AND POLITICS

ONE wonders sometimes whether Mr. Baldwin takes the trouble to read the Bills for which, as head of the Government, he is responsible. If, for instance, he really knew what the Local Government Bill proposes to do with the health services of the authorities, would it be possible for him to make the preposterous claim that adorned his Worcester speech? He actually singled out for sanctimonious praise the most vicious feature of it, asserting that it is going to "convert our people from C8 to A1." This is to happen as the result, apparently, of widening the local areas for hospital and other health matters. If Mr. Baldwin is too busy to work up the matter of his speeches for himself, surely his secretaries ought to have saved him from this absurdity. What is likely to be the benefit of larger areas when put against the effect of merging the percentage grants for the health services in the new block grant?—a financial "reform" which Lord Eustace Percy tried on in the case of education, and was forced to drop, such was the outcry from all the progressive administrators in the country. If Mr. Baldwin does not know the answer, let him ask any Councillor who is struggling in his locality to keep going infant welfare or maternity work, a task that is just possible on the pound for pound basis, and will assuredly become impossible in many poor places when this inducement to good civics is removed. Mr. Baldwin is on safer party ground when he is labouring to frighten the new electorate with the Socialist bogey. A clever cartoonist in a Tory paper has drawn him as the pilot of an aeroplane called "Question Mark," that can keep up in the air longer than any other. I predict that Mr. Baldwin will come down to earth in time. He will "crash."

I have been watching the American news with interest to discover signs of the "reaction" of the Puritans over there to "The Well of Loneliness." It will be remembered that an American edition has been published, with an appreciation by Havelock Ellis. Well, what I expected has happened, or is about to happen. The formidable Society for the Suppression of Vice has got wind of it, and is gleefully preparing for a luscious campaign. One may now anticipate a famous hue and cry in the American papers. The information reaches me in an excellent article in THE NATION of New York, whose comments seem to me admirable in their tolerance and common sense. The NEW YORK NATION predicts that the case will be made the excuse for an important extension of the existing State law relating to obscenity. There is already a law forbidding any play which deals with sexual perversion, and "The Well of Loneliness" case probably will be used to extend it to novels. Hitherto, I gather, no *subject* has been taboo in literature; the law concerning itself only with whether "the treatment was such as to debauch the reader." I hope that the people in America for whom papers like the NEW YORK NATION stand will make a good fight against this new attempt to limit the field of serious artistic enterprise.

In the absence of more momentous happenings, the newspapers continue to "splash"—to use Fleet Street slang—the domestic affairs of the Salvation Army. It is perhaps unfortunate that the affair has become a "sensation," for the inevitable result is that ignorant onlookers simplify the controversy into a melodrama. The popular view seems to be that this is a struggle between ardent reformers and a moribund "General," tenacious of autocratic power. This is, of course, a travesty of the facts. True, there is a strong desire, especially in the American Army, already semi-independent, for democratic government, but it is absurd to regard General Booth as a champion of autocracy or reaction. He is probably habitually undervalued in comparison with his father, who was, indeed, an overbearing autocrat, as well as an original genius. General Bramwell Booth is an extremely able man; the Army has flourished under his guidance and inspiration. The assumption, on which the Commissioners called the High Council, that he was permanently "unfit," turns out to be mistaken, on the evidence of his doctors. It would be a cruel thing if this extraordinary business developed into an outcry against an old, sick, and perfectly blameless man, who has, as a matter of fact, known how to reconcile personal rule, on which the Army organization is based, with efficiency and tolerance.

Londoners, on the whole, looked on with almost cynical indifference at the destruction of the Foundling Hospital, a perfect expression of one aspect of eighteenth-century civilization. They seem to be taking as little interest in the struggle of a small and plucky group to save this corner of Bloomsbury from commercial vulgarization. It is a hard, almost a hopeless, struggle, seeing that the pass was most regrettably sold by the Foundling Authorities, when they disposed of their fine old place, for an enormous sum, without imposing any conditions either as to the preservation of the building or as to the worthy public use of the site. Still, the Protection Association did succeed in killing the Covent Garden scheme. It is now out against another and even more objectionable plan, by which flats would be combined with a great exhibition hall. If there were only sufficient care for the health and amenities of a gracious part of London, the Foundling Site would be preserved as an open space. If that is impossible—one imagines the horror of the commercial mind when it is suggested to spend over a million on a salutary abstention from building—I hope the Protection Association will succeed in the ingenious legal contention that has been hit upon, which would forbid access to this new "Olympia" on the ground of public rights over the gardens. It would be refreshing if a commercial syndicate for once came a cropper over an obstacle of this kind.

I am writing in a London suburb, at noon, with all the lights burning. Outside is a horror of gross darkness. People are cursing the fog. There is no fog. A fog is mist mixed with dirt from the chimneys. This is simple dirt. There is a solid layer of soot suspended like a roof over the city, shutting out the sun as completely as in a total eclipse. Such is the dismal effect of calm weather after a cold spell in a town that insists on pouring some fantastic number of tons of filth into the air it breathes, and so robbing itself of health and light and joy in existence. I should think that nothing would more astonish a visitor from some presumably more intelligent planet, than to discover London, and every big manufacturing town, complacently and unnecessarily poisoning its own atmosphere. Fogs and smoke palls are certainly less solid than in Victorian days; we owe a little more sunshine to the gas fire and electricity. I see that Mr. Baldwin the other day

presented himself with a solicited testimonial for the Government's electricity development scheme. I feel like the poor man who interrupted the singer in the middle of "There's a good time coming," with the pathetic cry, "Can you give it a date?" I will do my small share towards thinning the fog as soon as I can afford it.

* * *

Next week the Prime Minister and other great men will be indulging in reminiscences of the days when they looked forward to the week's "Boys' Own Paper," for the latest instalment of Jules Verne, or Ballantyne, or for light on how to make an engine out of an old tin can. I should like to add my own word of elderly appreciation. I do not know what schoolboys read now—looking over the shoulders of boys in 'buses suggests that they are faithful to the crook and Wild West bloodshed—but I remember that we used to think the breezy heroics of the "B. O. P." the real, right thing. We were not much impressed by the parental view that the healthy tone was good for us; we read it in spite of that. We thought Talbot Baines Reed the only writer who had any notion of what school life should be in a properly ill-regulated world; and in my sober age I hold that he wrote the best of all school tales, the most free from mature morality. The "B. O. P." was accepted because of its reasonable view of life as an affair full of jolly and exciting events, that need not in the least be true. There was no pestilential "literature" about it; there was abundant farce and bravery, and also (thank goodness) no tears. I am told, and I can well believe it, that the "Boys' Own Paper" worked a useful revolution in reading for boys half a century ago. Of course, its devoted readers in the eighties knew or cared nothing about that. We drew from it week by week a doubtless touching but entirely sincere faith in the brisk traffic of heroism.

* * *

Henry Arthur Jones had rather slipped out of the memory of this generation of playgoers, though the play he wrote for Sybil Thorndike a few years ago showed all his old neatness and skill. I suppose he brought no new ideas to the theatre, but he could utilize current ideas deftly for entertainment purposes. He had the journalist's topical sense. One must give him full credit for his unvarying cleverness at his trade; he and Pinero between them certainly redeemed the stage of the eighties and nineties from the reign of amateurish inanity. One need only glance through a piece like "Judith" (1890), or almost any of the drawing-room comedies written for Wyndham, to be convinced of Jones's technical accomplishment. The war turned his head completely, and converted him from being an able workman for the stage, cheerfully unencumbered by serious purpose, to a querulous and rather absurd propagandist for Imperialism and "robust politics." He was still good at his special job. I remember being struck by the extraordinary ability of presentation of a little anti-German parable he produced during the war. The case against pacifism could not be put with more point. (Its lesson, if there was a lesson, was enforced by the air-raid that raged on London on the first night.) In the frantic campaign he carried on latterly with grotesque persistence, against Wells and Shaw—the latter treated him with characteristic magnanimity—Jones became a figure of fun. He was not equipped by intellect or training to take on such formidable antagonists in the field of politics and economics. It is well to forget Jones the shrill preacher, and to remember Jones the playwright, the man who in his day raised the commercialized stage as high as is possible within its restricted range of reality.

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LABOUR'S BELLICOSITY

SIR,—The space your courtesy could allow me would make it impossible to follow far the trail of the red herring which Mr. Finmore has laid across the trail I was following when I desired "Kappa" to enlarge a little on his assertion that "the tradition of Labour in this country is bellicose"; but two comments I would like to make. Mr. Finmore quotes "the less scrupulous Labour speakers" as saying: (1) the Liberals caused the War, and (2) there would have been no war if a Labour Government had been in power; he thinks he has disproved these statements by quoting a resolution of the Parliamentary Labour Party in October, 1914, supporting the war because of the German invasion of Belgium.

Now (1) whatever party or parties caused the war—in this or any other country—it could not have been the Labour Party, which had never yet been in office anywhere.

(2) The invasion of Belgium was not the cause, but the consequence of the war which had already broken out. There are odd freaks in political life, but one can scarcely conceive Labour being suddenly put into power in July, 1914, except as the result of a tremendous national upheaval against the secret diplomacy which had been steadily drawing the Powers into war for years past. Such an upheaval was impossible in any country *at that time*. No party was strong enough for it, and only individuals knew enough to be prepared to resist the suction. Sir Edward Grey (like his predecessors) had been allowed to tie this country up in a secret commitment of honour to France, and through France, to Russia. The Labour Party did not approve Sir Edward Grey's policy, but held that, Germany having invaded neutral Belgium (as a result of the outbreak of war), this country was bound to enter the war against the invader. In my opinion, the Labour Party's interpretation of the situation was, at first, much too *simpliste*, but it was not "bellicose."

I agree that the Liberals who left their party round about 1918 did so in its "darkest hour"; but perhaps Mr. Finmore and I would not agree as to the nature of that "darkness" which co-operated with Tory "darkness" in the policies of the knock-out-blow, the post-war blockade of Germany, the fomentation and financing of civil war in Russia, the Black-and-Tan occupation of Ireland, and which finally broke with Toryism over the Chanak episode, in which the Tories saw further than the Coalition Prime Minister.—Yours, &c.,

H. M. SWANWICK.

Kew, January 5th, 1929.

NOVELS AND DECENCY

SIR,—"No society," says your correspondent P. J. E., "can tolerate that which is anti-social." This dogma has been the justification of nearly every persecution in history, and among the numerous innovators that have been sacrificed to it are Jesus of Nazareth and Socrates. In the Middle Ages, for example, nothing could have been more anti-social than theological heresy, for Catholicism was interwoven in the very structure of mediæval society. Yet it is a defensible opinion that the crusade against the Albigensian heresy in the thirteenth century and the consequent destruction by the greatly inferior northern civilization of the culture of Languedoc, then the finest in Europe, put back European civilization for centuries.

There is just as much justification—and no more—for persecuting moral heresy as for persecuting theological heresy. The basis of toleration is that we can never be sure that we are right. If we could be—if we could know the absolute truth—persecution would be not merely justifiable, it would be a duty. The Catholic Church, believing as it does that it is infallible and knows the absolute truth in matters concerning faith and morals, would fail in its duty if it did not persecute when it had the power. The Catholic argument in favour of persecution that spiritual and moral poison are even more pernicious than material poison would be unanswerable—if we could be as sure that

any given opinion is morally or spiritually poisonous as we are that a certain quantity of prussic acid will cause death. The answer is that we can never be sure of it.

P. J. E. is, in fact, claiming to be infallible, for he is quite sure that a particular opinion about sexual matters is anti-social, and should therefore be repressed. Yet there have been, and are, wide differences of opinion at different periods, and even in different countries at the same period, as to what is or is not anti-social. I have seen within my own lifetime opinions pass from the stage of being considered anti-social by nine people out of ten to that of being accepted by nine people out of ten as matters of course.

There is no safety except in the old liberal principle of absolute freedom for the expression of opinion; it is the only liberty that can be absolute. The opinions that most need to be secured freedom are precisely those considered by the great majority of people to be anti-social, immoral, blasphemous, or subversive. The opinions of the majority can take care of themselves. I do not deny that liberty of opinion may do some harm, but I maintain that experience has shown that repression does much more harm. And we run the risk of repressing something that may turn out to be of immense value to the world, as has more than once happened in the past.

What evidence is there that the increased freedom in sexual matters and the frankness of contemporary literature in dealing with them have done harm? The evidence seems to me the other way. I will not flatter the youth of the present day by telling them that they are superior in every way to the young generation to which I belonged, for we were not apathetic and indifferent, and my experience both in England and France confirms what is said by the authors of the two books noticed by Mr. Leonard Woolf in *THE NATION* of December 22nd. But in one respect, at any rate, the youth of the present day are far superior to the youth of my generation. Their attitude and conduct where sexual matters are concerned are much more sane, clean, and healthy.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT DELL.

January 7th, 1929.

SIR,—I am sorry that some of my phrases have left Mr. Woolf in doubt whether or not I am asking for a legal Press censorship. My plea was for individual responsibility and moral judgment. He says that everyone will agree with this. This seems to me an astonishing statement. Surely it is a patent fact that there is no inconsiderable number of novelists and reviewers who hold that the moral influence of a book is an irrelevant matter and that those who think otherwise are antiquated and prudish Victorians. I have no objection myself to being labelled a Victorian, but I believe that the reassertion of the claims of a moral standard is in the true interests of liberty.—Yours, &c.,

F. E. POLLARD.

Reading.

January 7th, 1929.

THE DOUBLE-KEYBOARD PIANO

SIR,—Mr. Cecil Gray, in his article on the "Moor" Double-Keyboard Piano in *THE NATION* of December 15th last, raises a very large subject when he refers to the "part played by instrumental limitations in our æsthetic pleasure," and dismisses it rather casually by saying that as the result of the perfection of instrumental mechanism "the composer must now impose restrictions on himself in place of those formerly supplied by the instrument, which is a very difficult thing to do." But the composing of music of any value at all is a very difficult thing to do! And Mr. Gray, by making this last statement, admits that an artist may impose upon himself his own restrictions.

Surely artists have imposed restrictions on themselves ever since art was born. The Sonata form, for instance, arose out of the musician's instinctive need of formal restriction, and the fact that the composition of chamber music has survived at all since the invention of the orchestra is a proof of a desire for tonal limitation. Had music been confined to the primitive instruments on account of the fear of the composers of the time that new instrumental inventions were going to make chaos for ever of their technical

principles, we should have had no modern orchestra, and hence, in all probability, no Berlioz and no Wagner.

The introduction of the "Moor" piano may produce a little discomfiture in the world of piano composers for a short time, and lead to the composition of a certain quantity of inferior music designed to show off its superior technique. But I hope that the great artists of the future are not as timid as Mr. Gray is, otherwise who can say what possible æsthetic joys we shall miss through having turned our backs on the idea of progress in instrumental mechanism?

After all, there will be nothing to prevent composers from still writing for the old single-keyboard piano. If it produces different effects, then it is a different instrument, and composers will be as free to write for it as they are now free to write for unaccompanied violin, or, to use a more strict analogy, for one piano rather than for two pianos. But it will be a bad day for music, as for other arts and sciences, when we are forced to shrink from the consequences of our own inventions.

Incidentally, if the inventor of the "Moor" piano were induced also to invent a means by which successions of certain chords of fixed interval, such as consecutive fifths, sevenths, and ninths, could be played on single notes like a simple scale, a somewhat ruthless light would be cast on some of the mannerisms of our minor composers.—Yours, &c.,

W. H. MONTAGU-POLLOCK.

British Legation, Prague.

January 3rd, 1929.

THE NARDINI VERDICT

SIR,—Mr. Magri in his letter on the Nardini verdict, in your issue of January 5th, accuses me of "slight inaccuracies," without, however, quoting any definite instances. On the other hand, he tells us that the assassin Di Modugno was obliged to reside in his native town, where he could find no work. Yet from the evidence which I quoted before it is clear that while he was in France and Luxemburg, where to my knowledge there is not a Fascist regime, he did not do a stroke of honest work for many months, preferring Communist propaganda as being less fatiguing and more paying. Mr. Magri adds that the "dilly dallying" of the authorities in Italy had driven him half-crazy. Yet his wife was writing to him that she had good hopes of securing her passport; in any case, the "dilly dallying" of the Italian authorities seems hardly a sufficient excuse for the brutal and premeditated murder of a harmless old man, known as the father of the Italian colony in Paris on account of his innumerable acts of kindness.

Mr. Magri expresses surprise that I quoted the *LIBERTÉ*'s statement that eighty-two other crimes had been committed in France against Fascists, and expects me to quote from my own private information. I do not keep a record of French criminal statistics, and I only quoted the *LIBERTÉ* to show that there are honest papers in France (and the *LIBERTÉ* is by no means the only one) which deplore these outrages. But here are a few notorious cases: Silvio Lombardi, murdered in Paris, September 2nd, 1923; Gino Iori, murdered in Paris, September 3rd, 1923; Nicola Bonservizi, mortally wounded in Paris, February 20th, 1924 (died of wounds March 26th); Pietro Poli, murdered at Longwy, July 8th, 1924; Giovanni Stefani, Passeva, Mentone Cavanna, Ugo Righi, Olindo Grantini, wounded.

Finally, Mr. Magri states that the outburst against France was a deliberate Fascist political manœuvre inspired by the Fascist Government. Here he commits not a "slight inaccuracy," but a very gross one. The outburst was general throughout Italy, and quite regardless of internal political views. If he reads recent Italian history he will come upon many similar outbursts in the days before Fascism was born. I need only mention the very serious riots after the French occupation of Tunis in 1882, and those provoked by the massacre of Italian workmen at Aigues-Mortes in 1893.—Yours, &c.,

LUIGI VILLARI.

8, Duke Street,

St. James's Square, S.W.1.

January 7th, 1929.

[This correspondence must now cease.—Ed., *NATION*.]

ETTORE SCHMITZ (ITALO SVEVO)

A MOTOR skidding on the road near Trieste, a few months ago, caused the death of Ettore Schmitz, millionaire head of a shipping firm, and of Italo Svevo, Italy's greatest living novelist. Ettore Schmitz was aged sixty-seven, fortunate in his affairs, universally beloved for his genial personality and generous nature, evidently a great social figure in Trieste. But this exceedingly popular person, whose business career must have been almost over, died prematurely in the world of letters, for Italo Svevo, though his first novel was written thirty-five years ago, had enjoyed only five years of literary fame, and in Italy was still almost unknown. The inner relation between these two, the brilliant and successful business man and the equally brilliant but unsuccessful man of letters, is a matter of fascinating conjecture. The external bond was, however, also important; Ettore Schmitz paid for the publication of Italo Svevo's novels.

His first novel, "Una Vita," the intimate history of a bank clerk and his frustrated love-affair with the bank director's daughter, was published in 1898 when Ettore Schmitz was thirty-two. There is nothing immature in his treatment of the story; the various scenes and characters are drawn with admirable and convincing reality. There is practically no description, never any interposition of the author between us and his drama. The characters rise before us, the story develops with a quite delusive simplicity. The typical Svevian hero is already essentially there, in Alfonso the bank-clerk; the same subtlety, introspection, self-destructive irony; the same tolerance, intellectual passion and purpose to understand a world whose huge insensitiveness defeats him. But Alfonso is the only finally defeated Svevian hero, as he is also the least fantastic and the least humorous.

In 1898 appeared "Senilità," a novel as original in treatment as "Una Vita," and more developed in Italo Svevo's peculiar technique—in some ways the most perfect of his three novels. It is again a love story in a bourgeois setting, the liaison of a young employé of literary tastes and very limited means with a charming and corrupt girl of the people. The subject is banal enough, but the irony and pathos of the story hold one from the first: the repercussion of the hero's egotistic and absorbing passion on the poor repressed sister who keeps house for him; the brutal unveiling of her own timid and hopeless love for her brother's sculptor-friend, a cynic and fortunate lover, who sweeps through the book like a force of nature, tearing the web of complicated emotions which the hero is always ready to spin afresh.

"Una Vita" had been favourably reviewed; "Senilità" was not reviewed at all. Silence descended on the author and his works. He tells us in his preface to the new edition of "Senilità," published last year, that he had come by degrees to take the view evidently held by all the critics, that he was no writer and had better stick to commerce.

So for twenty-five years Italo Svevo disappeared, while Ettore Schmitz apparently grew and prospered. Perhaps the war, which increased his leisure, perhaps also the sympathy of James Joyce, then living in Trieste, encouraged him to write again. In 1923 appeared his third and longest novel, "La Coscienza di Zeno," which was immediately hailed as a work of genius by Léon Daudet, Valéry Larbaud, and Benjamin Crémieux. Save for two short stories, one published in February of this year, this is, as far as we know, the sum of his literary activity.

"La Coscienza di Zeno," by which Italo Svevo will

undoubtedly always be best known, is the most complex, and in actual form the least perfect, of his novels; for it consists of several long, loosely linked autobiographical episodes, each of which is practically complete in itself. A psycho-analytic doctor, whom Zeno treats with half-humorous, half-exasperated contempt, inspires the autobiography and lingers down to its last page, by which time he has fallen into deep disgrace.

A sense of disease, Zeno thinks, is like a sense of sin; one is born with it or without it. He was born with it. A casual meeting with an acquaintance in a café, who tells him as a joke that every step we take involves the action of fifty-four muscles, at once makes Zeno limp for several days afterwards. He pictures the joints running short of oil and chafing each other. "Even to-day" (many years later), "if I feel someone watching me as I walk, I get tied up in those fifty-four movements and can only by an effort prevent myself from falling." Zeno also had another weakness, "la malattia delle parole"—"I loved her simple speech, I, who could not open my lips without misrepresenting things and people; because otherwise talking would not have seemed worth while. . . . Language I regarded as having an independent existence, as an event in itself, and therefore not to be bound by any other event." This malady of words leads him into the most perverse situations. It also, alas, makes him impossible to quote except at great length, for whichever incident one thinks of: the psychological results of a scratch by an angora cat in a London book-shop, his wooing of three sisters in succession on the same evening, and capture of the one he least wanted for a wife, his suicidal criticism of a rival lover's Bach playing, his pious following of the wrong funeral procession, all prove to have so many humorous implications which to omit is like showing the staterooms without their private boudoirs and powdering-closets where the secrets of character hide; Svevo's humour, never obvious, never exactly brilliant, always seems to lurk just beyond the quotation.

The strange case of Italo Svevo has, since his discovery, been the subject of many articles in French literary papers, and echoes of his fame had begun to reverberate in Italy. It is perhaps less strange that Italy should have ignored for a quarter of a century one of the most original writers of his age than that a shipping magnate of Trieste should prove to be a literary genius. But it illustrates once more the mistake of being original at the wrong moment. For if poets are—as Shelley says—the legislators of the world, he admits they are generally unacknowledged. It seems to need a lucky ninth wave to roll them into favour. Proust was perhaps Italo Svevo's ninth wave. He is freely mentioned as an influence in the work of Svevo, but his influence was really on Svevo's public. In "Senilità" Svevo's so-called Proustian method was in full swing, and the book fell flat. Between 1898, the date of its publication, and 1923 ("La Coscienza di Zeno"), the star of Proust had with difficulty risen, and Léon Daudet, one of the first to hail it, was also one of Svevo's first admirers. But perhaps his pseudonym, "Italian of Swabia," hints at a possible reason for his tepid reception in Italy. Ettore Schmitz, like many pre-war Triestians, was educated in Germany, and the idiom of that country has lingered in his prose. It is possible even for a foreigner to detect a certain crudity and awkwardness in his style, distressing to an ear nurtured in the pure Tuscan idiom. In any case Italians do not seem able to enjoy him, and this is always the reason given. What entertainment we might have missed by being more sensitive!

Svevo is a born novelist. He has only to name a character for it to come to life. There are very few descriptive passages, little imagery, no rhetoric, no romantic

glamour, and though there are plenty of fantastic situations, they do not motivate the action but spring from vagaries of character. No one was ever less sensational; even a suicide is the quietest and least flamboyant of full-stops. Nor had he any use for provocative titles. It was suggested to him that "Senilità" was an odd and dismal title for the story of a young man's love. In the preface to last year's reprint, he admits it to be paradoxical, but refuses to change it, because it represented, he says, a personal experience. All Italo Svevo's novels have unusually the air of being a personal experience, perhaps because there is only one hero under a different guise. We meet him five times, in three novels and two short stories, always temperamentally the same—intelligent, neurotic, abounding in introspection and sympathy, fantastically in love and incompetently ambitious, but in "Zeno" paradoxically a winner. He is the nearest intellectual parallel to Buster Keaton, unheroic, solitary, despised and rejected, who graduates in failure and wins the race by prodigious luck or pure genius. A large humanity, a profoundly humorous view of life, are implicit in the creation of Svevo's most famous character; and we can at least infer that the creator of one of the most intelligent heroes in fiction was himself prodigiously intelligent.

BERYL DE ZOETE.

DUTCH ART AT BURLINGTON HOUSE

THIS time last year, in respect to the Flemish Exhibition, I tried to indicate the general characteristics of Flemish painting, partly by comparing its aims to those of what I called the Central European tradition, as exemplified particularly by Italian art. I showed how essentially provincial the Flemish school was in comparison to that, until with Rubens Italian ideas came in and produced a most interesting variation of the central tradition. In a sense everything in the evolution of Flemish art is intelligible and explicable. The Dutch are far less amenable to explanation, more paradoxical, more surprising in every way. I doubt if there is in the whole known history of art a parallel to this strange phenomenon of the almost sudden efflorescence of painting of a peculiar and quite original kind for about a century followed by an abrupt decline and relative sterility.

One cannot help wondering what odd and yet slight accident of racial origin or what peculiarities of climate or social habits gave to this small Germanic country so striking and so solitary a pre-eminence in the matter of art among Germanic peoples.

Moreover, and this is what makes the whole situation so paradoxical, the most salient and the most fundamental quality of this Dutch art of the seventeenth century is its transparent, sentimental honesty. The great distinction of these artists, even the minor ones, is their fidelity to their own sensual and emotional reactions. And it is just this quality which the Germanic, as opposed to the Latin peoples, seem generally incapable of. The fatal malady of almost all German and a great deal of Anglo-Saxon art is precisely its sentimental dishonesty, its desire to seem to express something more intense, more moving, more "poetical" than what the artists have actually experienced.

One might perhaps be inclined to guess that this disease which cuts at the root of so much Northern art was connected in some way with the anxious moral consciousness, and the desire for edification which goes with our mainly Protestant inclinations. But then, who more edifying, more

strenuously virtuous, more intolerant in their Puritanism than the Dutch? One suspects, too, that as usually happens, the inevitable reaction from too exacting a standard was a certain grossness in the sensual life of this people, and yet—once more the paradox—they show an unheard of acuteness in their visual sensations and, what is more, cultivated these with a rare contemplative detachment. Whence came this fine point which they put on their sensations, this gastronomic daintiness in a people whom we must judge to have been decidedly gross and brutal ever according to the standards of the day?

And yet another cause of wonder in face of this miraculous efflorescence lies in the fact that the Dutch did it all by themselves. No artists owed less to external influence, and yet they found the clue, along new and untrodden paths, to the line of march of the central tradition.

Like the Flemings, the Dutch Primitives were provincial in the sense that they were ignorant of and indifferent to the fundamental principles of plastic design as developed in Italy. But whereas the Flemings became central through the direct importation of Italian ideas and their embodiment in the art of Rubens, the Dutch were altogether half-hearted in their attempts at Italianizing, and their Protestant bias led them to reject that happy blend of Paganism and Christianity which ran riot through the contemporary art of Flanders.

Like the Flemings, they were incapable by nature of that love of abstract principles which led the Italians to search for a scientific basis of design and to elaborate all the conscious artistic scholarship of the High Renaissance. Like the Flemings, they were fondly attached to all the familiar things of everyday life, so that when Christian mythology went by the board they were left without any imaginary world for the painter to express in outward form; they were left face to face with the facts and sensations of everyday life.

And yet, owing to some strange felicity in their make-up, by means of some special instinctive gift, they were able to build securely, at times even magnificently, upon that, and to build in a way that it had never occurred to artists to build before. For in all previous art we find the artist either, like the Italians, working from the general principles of a plastic architecture which he fills out with the likeness of the external world, or, like the Flemings, content to use the mere likenesses of things as the basis of an essentially literary appeal to curiosity or sentiment. But the Dutch did neither. They had the instinct to hold aloof from the thing seen. They discovered how to dwell upon and investigate their sensations. They thus became aware of the interaction of all the separate sensations to which any field of vision gave rise. Instead of isolating those sensations which belong to each object, they learnt to express their mutual interdependence. They thus passed beyond that mere descriptive catalogue of the items of a scene which was what Michaelangelo reproached their Flemish neighbours with. They invented Impressionism.

Thus, although they started without those general ideas of harmonious architectural planning which had guided the Italians, they arrived by quite another route at new and surprising but equally solid plastic constructions. And since that architectural basis of Italian pictorial design was lacking, that reference to an original symmetrical disposition which haunts even the freest designs of the High Renaissance, and which even the Baroque artists could not easily belie, is also absent and, from the first, fundamentally asymmetrical systems of design are handled with a new assurance and ease by the Dutch masters. That is to say that, with no *a priori* scheme in their minds to which to refer the observed field of vision they had to rely on their innate or acquired feeling for harmonious disposition

of volumes and balance of directions, and here, too, that surprising delicacy of sensibility served them well.

The peculiar character of Dutch seventeenth-century art as a whole is seen, then, to be due to a number of curious and unrelated circumstances. Some of these circumstances were common to them and their Flemish neighbours; such were, the original absence of any system of architectural monumental design such as Italy developed; the absence of that scientific generalizing spirit of the Italian artists and more generally of the love of abstract principle of the Southern races; their love of the concrete fact and their keen appreciation of the things of daily life. Other circumstances were peculiar to Holland, such as the refractoriness of the Dutch, entrenched in their Protestantism, to the whole system of Pagan-Catholic mythology which inspired Rubens and his circle. Finally, the most mysterious and least explicable factor of all, that innate discrimination and daintiness of their sensual feeling, that refraining from the too immediate grasp of the material thing, that detached contemplation of visual sensations in all the complexity of their mutual reactions. Here at least speculation must stop before the inextricable complexity of possible causes, racial strains, influence of the aspects of the surrounding landscape, of climate and of atmosphere, both physical and moral. We have simply to note the fact of this amazing outburst of intensely original and widespread creative effort, of a strange subtlety of expression in a people of whom nothing would have led us *a priori* to expect it.

The result of all these circumstances was that the Dutch painters of the seventeenth century passed almost at one bound from the late Northern Gothic tradition of painting to the methods and aims of the nineteenth century. Again and again in looking round the walls of Burlington House one finds oneself in just that immediate contact with the painter's attitude, with his way of seeing, his method of interpreting which seems to belong to our own immediate past. Again and again one wonders to find how many of the aspects of nature which form the theme of modern painting have been seized upon and noted with an almost uncanny precision by these men. Already in one of the Primitives, the neurotic Master of the *Virgo inter Virgines* I seem to guess at the first hints of this special modernity of vision. One sees in his backgrounds a consciousness of atmospheric values which is unlike contemporary work elsewhere. In a garden seen from the Virgin Annunciate's chamber, there is already a hint of Saanredam, and Saanredam—who is, by the by, one of the revelations of this exhibition—more than hints at Seurat, planning his flat planes with something of Seurat's geometrical accuracy and, for all their apparent flatness, modulating them with almost imperceptible subtleties which give life and movement and a vivid realization of space. How many of the motives of Impressionism may be seen foreshadowed in Salomon Ruysdael's luminous skies, whilst Vermeer seems to epitomize some of our most-loved nineteenth-century masters; the quality of light of the Early Corot; the fastidious choiceness of the finest Whistlers, and, in his great view of Delft, that firm belief of terrestrial things seen against infinite depths of luminous sky, on which Pissaro, Sisley, and Seurat expended such patient research. Cuyp, it is true, wears a more old-fashioned air, but it is only on the surface, it is only the outer envelope of his harmonies which affects us thus. One has only to become acclimatized, as it were, to feel how intensely modern his notations of effects are. And everywhere, what is likely to astonish the professional painter far more than the layman, is the scholarship, the accumulated lore of natural appearance that underlies these quiet and deliberate productions. One finds again and again that the painters make

use, for their harmonies, of effects so subtle, so scarcely perceptible that none but those who have looked constantly at nature with intent curiosity of eye would even recognize their truth.

I have tried in this essay to give some idea of those general characteristics of the Dutch school which strike one with renewed force in a first contact with this magnificent and representative collection, and I find I have not so much as mentioned Rembrandt, before whom all else pales into relative insignificance. But Rembrandt, from whatever angle one approaches the art of painting, is always "another story."

ROGER FRY.

THE DRAMA

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY IN DRAMA

Arts Theatre Club: "The Lady With a Lamp." By REGINALD BERKELEY.

IT is certainly difficult, perhaps impossible, to make a purely artistic judgment about a historical play, when it really is historical. Macbeth and Hamlet are perhaps historical characters, but as we know nothing about them except what Shakespeare tells us, the difficulty does not apply. But politically-minded persons find Victor Hugo's tricks with Cromwell intolerable, whereas Sir Henry Irving made a good thing out of Victorian sentimentality about Charles I. Still, for most of us Charles I. and Cromwell are beginning to become anonymous, but when such new ground as Florence Nightingale is cut by Mr. Reginald Berkeley, the problem is aggravated. For the genius of Florence Nightingale is essentially modern: she was known well to people not yet old: we must all have strong personal feelings about her; she is part of our childhood. What would be the effect of "The Lady With a Lamp" on someone who had never heard of Florence Nightingale I cannot imagine, and therefore dare hazard no ultimate judgment on the play.

I wept copiously on more than one occasion. This is perhaps a bad sign. On the other hand, a play must have something in it which can reduce a dramatic critic to such an unwonted display of sensibility. But I was aware all the while that I was being in part cheated, that my emotion was greatly caused by my feelings about Florence Nightingale, not about "The Lady With a Lamp." Yet it is a large thing not to be revolted. Mr. Berkeley is intelligent, unsentimental, extremely up-to-date, and ironical, as well as pathetic in his treatment; and his play is very well written. The *ipsissima verba* of Miss Nightingale are skillfully incorporated in the dialogue, so that the spectator is not shocked. Mr. Berkeley follows the story pretty closely. We see her first discontented in her Hampshire home, follow her to the Crimea, sit by her bedside in South Street, and finally witness the grotesque presentation of the O.M. and of the bouquet gathered by the Kaiser, which by the way, according to Miss Rosalind Nash, is a figment of Mr. Strachey's imagination. Her dismissal of her lover, for which there is historical evidence, is tactfully treated, and the passage in which he dies in her arms at Scutari, by its violent contrast with the busy practical life she has been leading a minute before, has really tragic grip. This and the presentation are the two biggest and best scenes in the play.

The only serious point on which Mr. Berkeley contradicts accepted history (it is also, I thought, the weakest passage) is the portrayal of Lady Herbert, who is made not only jealous of Florence's hold over her husband, but, also, maliciously responsible for the dispatch of the second batch of nurses, which nearly brought disaster into the hospitals. The biographers are maddeningly discreet, and

Mr. Berkeley may have inside information : otherwise one cannot help thinking Lady Herbert has been rather ill-used. No one would think of wondering whether or not Shakespeare ill-used Gertrude.

Still, the subject is a good one in the strict theatrical sense. As we straggle over most of the nineteenth into the twentieth century, a subtle call is made to our time sense, which is more developed to-day than it ever has been before. As crinolines give way to bustles, and bustles to Edwardian fashions, as Palmerston's blue coat changes into the melancholy black of the twentieth-century politician, a solid chunk of time has been heaped on to our spiritual breakfast table. When all is said and done, Mr. Berkeley's is a genuine achievement.

Judging by the dress rehearsal, the play is in some need of cutting : we heard the same thing said too often, and Miss Edith Evans, who sentimentalized her part, made it worse by speaking with a monotonous drawn-out emphasis, which Miss Nightingale would have considered a shocking waste of time. Miss Evans's diction is getting terribly mannered. Also she went, in "get-up," straight from thirty to ninety, missing out, as we should all like to do, the dingy stretches of middle age. Personally, I preferred Miss Ffrangcon-Davies, as Lady Herbert, who was far less mannered than I have often seen her. The play contains about forty speaking parts, as well as an army of mutes. It will be a great pity if this means that "The Lady With a Lamp" is not put on for a run. Incidentally, it will almost certainly run for three hundred nights, and this, too, makes me rather uncomfortable. The décor was always tasteful, and the production intelligent.

A man behind me remarked : "I got a couple of books on the subject, and after finishing them discovered I had been reading about Grace Darling." Of such stuff are "theatre lovers" made.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

MR. WILLIAM POEL, the great revolutionary of theatrical production, has chosen for his third "platform stage production" an adaptation of Fletcher's "Bonduca" which he has called "Britain." He has constructed a most ingenious stage on three planes and utilized it excellently for the massing of his crowds, and the development of a plot which necessitated an intolerable deal of stage fighting. Unfortunately, the play seemed to me as cold as the hall and as generally indifferent as the acoustics. The character of Caratach (or Caractacus), acted by Mr. Gordon Douglas, is supposed to be the most interesting feature of the play, but unfortunately I was hardly able to hear a word he said, and when I did, he seemed to me to be perorating uselessly when he ought to have been getting on with his job. Otherwise the play is chiefly remarkable for the character of the boy Hengo, who reduced Swinburne to hysterical admiration. That it was possible to make oneself heard was proved by Miss Margaret Scudamore as Boudicca, and by Mr. Speaight, an extremely promising young actor, who took the sympathetic part of a Roman officer in love with a British princess.

"No Other Tiger," at the St. James's Theatre, is an adaptation by Mr. A. E. W. Mason of his famous thriller of the same name, which I am ashamed of never having read. The play is on the whole an exciting one which can be recommended to harassed parents at the tail end of the Christmas holidays. Grown-up and jaded theatre-goers will, however, be inclined to feel that, despite good moments, there are too many loose ends left lying about, and that the catastrophe was only rendered possible by the imbecile conduct of the protagonists. Probably Mr. Mason found the adaptation no easy matter. Mr. Neilson-Terry gave a very full-blooded impersonation of a hot-tempered murderer returning almost mad from Cayenne, and Mr. George Carr

offered an extremely vivid sketch of a villainous Siamese servant. But one must protest against the Siamese, the most amiable nation in the world, being libelled in this manner. On the whole "No Other Tiger" is a play one enjoys more at the moment than in retrospect.

* * *

The London Group's 26th Exhibition opened last week at the New Burlington Galleries, and will remain open till January 26th. The general quality of the pictures is fairly high and shows vitality and intelligence and a genuine interest in painting for its own sake and in the possibilities of the medium. Many of the paintings, indeed, rely too much on intelligence and taste, and spring from the desire to be a painter rather than from the desire to paint : others reply on their amusing or ingenious qualities. But such work is always to be found in conjunction with work of real vitality and sincerity. The disappointing thing about the exhibition is that all the best work is to be found in the exhibits of the older and better known painters such as Mr. Duncan Grant, Mr. Matthew Smith, Mr. Mark Gertler, Mr. Sickert, Mrs. Vanessa Bell, Mr. Keith Baynes, Mr. Cedric Morris, and Mr. Frederick Porter, and that there is little sign among the work of lesser known exhibitors of painters who will come up to their level. Mr. Robert Medley, whose work shows considerable interest and promise, is an exception ; also Miss Frances Hodgkins and Mr. Douglas Davidson, though the specimens exhibited by the last two are not up to their best standard. Mr. Duncan Grant's "View from a Window" is perhaps the best picture here, and his "Pierrot Lunaire" is also a very delightful work, lovely in colour and full of movement. Mrs. Bell's "The Red Sofa," a large, rather academic work, is spacious and dignified and very beautifully painted, and Mr. Matthew Smith's four exhibits are certainly among the best pictures shown.

* * *

Things to see and hear in the coming week :—

Saturday, January 12th.—

Smeterlin, Piano Recital, Wigmore Hall, 3.

Professor C. H. Reilly, on "The New Liverpool Cathedral," 34-36, Bedford Square, 3.

Sunday, January 13th.—

The Venturers' Society, in "La Marquise d'Arois."

The Lyceum Club Stage Society, in "Two Women," at the Savoy.

Film—"Rien que les Heures," New Gallery Kinema, 2.30 (Film Society).

Monday, January 14th.—

"The Lady of Belmont," by Mr. St. John Ervine, at the Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich.

Opening of Exhibition of recently acquired Portraits, National Gallery.

Mr. Laurence Housman, on "Crime and Society," the Wireless, 9.15.

Tuesday, January 15th.—

Mr. Roger Fry, on "Representation in Art," Royal Society of Arts, 8.15.

Special Concert in aid of the Coalfields Distress Fund, Central Hall, Friends House, opposite Euston Station, 8.15 (Admission Free—Silver Collection).

Lecture, by Miss Edith Sitwell, 121, Charing Cross Road, 8.

Mrs. Winifred Whale, on "Henri Barbusse," Small Essex Hall, 7.30.

Gerald Cooper, Chamber Concert, Æolian Hall, 8.30.

Opening of the New Club Room, by Mrs. Thomas Hardy, British Drama League, 8, Adelphi Terrace, 4.30.

Thursday, January 17th.—

"La Bohème" (Puccini), at the Old Vic, 7.45.

Royal Philharmonic Society's Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.

Alida Klemantaski, reading poems by Francis Thompson, Poetry Bookshop, 6.

Friday, January 18th.—

B.B.C. Symphony Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.

Harold Ching and Gwendo Paul, Song and Piano Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.15.

OMICRON.

London Amusements.

SCALA THEATRE (1 min. Goodge St. Stn.)
DON'T MISS THE BEST PANTO IN LONDON.
CINDERELLA
Cast Includes: WILL EVANS, CHESTER FIELDS,
THE BROTHERS EGBERT,
OUIDA MACDERMOT, NORA EMERALD,
EDWIN DODDS, MAUDIE OLMAR, etc.
TWICE DAILY. 2.15 & 7.45. TWICE DAILY.
All Seats bookable. Popular Prices. Museum 6010.

ROYALTY THEATRE Gerrard 2690.
Every Evening at 8.30
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BIRD IN HAND
A Comedy by John Drinkwater.
308th PERFORMANCE TO-NIGHT JANUARY 12.
HERBERT LOMAS. IVOR BARNARD.
JILL ESMOND MOORE. FELIX AYLMEY.

MATINEES FOR THE WEEK.

APOLLO. Thurs. & Sat., at 2.30.
CARLTON. Weds. & Sats., at 2.30.
DUKE OF YORK'S. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
DRURY LANE. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
FORTUNE. Thurs., Sat., at 2.30.
GARRICK. Daily, at 2 o'clock.
HIPPODROME. Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.
KINGSWAY. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
"THE PATSY."
IN OTHER WORDS.
THE CHINESE BUNGALOW.
SHOW BOAT.
JEALOUSY.
PETER PAN.
"THAT'S A GOOD GIRL."
"MRS. MOONLIGHT."

LONDON PAVILION. Tues., Thur., 2.30.
LYRIC, Hammersmith. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
PRINCES. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
ROYALTY. Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
SCALA. Daily, at 2.15.
SHAFTESBURY. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
WYNDHAM'S. Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
"LUCKY GIRL."
A HUNDRED YEARS OLD.
FUNNY FACE.
BIRD IN HAND.
CINDERELLA.
THE LAD.
"THE LOVE-LORN LADY."

THEATRES.

ALDWYCH. (Gerrard 2304.) EVENINGS, 8.15.
MATINEES, WED. & FRI., 2.30.
"PLUNDER." A New Farce by Ben Travers.
TOM WALLS, MARY BROUGH, and RALPH LYNN.
APOLLO. (Gerr. 6970.) EVENINGS, 8.30. MATS., THURS. & SAT., 2.30.
HELEN FORD in "THE PATSY."
A Comedy in 3 Acts, by Barry Connors.
CARLTON, Haymarket. (Reg. 2211.) "IN OTHER WORDS."
EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATS., WEDS. & SATS., at 2.30.
GEORGE ROBEY and MARIE BLANCHE.
DRURY LANE. (Temple Bar 7171.) 8.15 precisely. Wed., Sat., 2.30.
"SHOW BOAT" A New Musical Play.
DUKE OF YORK'S. (Ger. 0313.) **MATHESON LANG** in
"THE CHINESE BUNGALOW."
EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.
FORTUNE (Temple Bar 7373.) **MARY NEWCOMB** in
"JEALOUSY." By Eugene Walters
With Crane Wilbur.
EVENINGS, at 8.40. Matinees, Thurs. & Sat., at 2.30.
GARRICK. (Gerr. 9513.) DAILY, at 2. WED., THURS., SAT. EVGS., at 8.
"PETER PAN." By J. M. Barrie.
MARIE LOHR, JEAN FORBES-ROBERTSON, MALCOLM KEEN.
HIPPODROME, London. Evenings, at 8.15. Gerrard 0650.
MATS., WEDS., THURS. & SATS., at 2.30.
"THAT'S A GOOD GIRL."
JACK BUCHANAN. ELSIE RANDOLPH.
HOLBORN EMPIRE. "WHERE THE RAINBOW ENDS."
MATINEES ONLY. DAILY, 2.15. ITALIA CONTI Prod.
Box Office and Libraries open. Popular Prices, 7/6, 5/-, etc. (Holb. 5367.)
KINGSWAY. (Holborn 4032.) EVENINGS, 8.40. WED. & SAT., 2.30.
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"THE RING"; MAY McAVOY in "A RENO DIVORCE," etc.
January 17th, 18th & 19th. POLA NEGRI in "LOVES OF AN ACTRESS";
DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, Junr., in "DEAD MAN'S CURVE," etc.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE FIRST RADICALS

M. ELIE HALÉVY is a historian with a European reputation, and his "*Histoire du Peuple anglais au XIX Siècle*" has been translated into English. It is curious that his earlier work, "*La Formation du Radicalisme Philosophique*," the first two parts of which were published, I think, as early as 1901, has not previously been translated. It is now published in an English translation under the title "*The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism*," by Elie Halévy, translated by Mary Morris (Faber & Gwyer, 30s.). The book is extremely stiff reading, for philosophic radicalism is itself not a light and airy subject, and M. Halévy is so philosophical a historian that he carries his reader deeper and deeper into those dim and difficult regions in which grow the roots of men's political and social beliefs. Those roots, too, are very often the roots of history itself. This sedulous digging down into the social, political, and economic beliefs of the past is what makes M. Halévy's work at once so difficult and so valuable. And his method is peculiarly suited to a study of the growth of nineteenth-century radicalism. The first radicals were not misnamed Philosophic Radicals. No political party has ever been more closely and firmly bound to theory, or to theory which was more deliberately theoretical, comprehensive, watertight. To those who are interested in what goes on in men's minds beneath the chaotic "facts" of history, this is an extraordinarily valuable study of the origins and meaning of utilitarianism and Benthamite radicalism, of their development at the hands of Bentham, Ricardo, and James Mill, and of their influence upon the political history of the first forty years of last century.

* * *

The theorist, or, to give him his grander name, the philosopher is not popularly supposed to cut a very good or important figure in the world of history, politics, and practical men. He is counted a dealer in utopias, and his utopia more often than not seems to be ridiculous rather than desirable. And Bentham and his disciples superficially were fair game for the practical man, since they never hesitated to ride the good horse logic to death or absurdity. The Master himself, when already elderly, seemed prepared at one moment to set sail for Mexico in order to take part in a revolution which was to establish Lieutenant-Colonel Aaron Burr as Emperor, with Bentham as Legislator; and surely no one has ever given a stranger reason for embarking on a revolutionary career in far-off foreign lands than the following:—

"The temperature is delightful, summer temperature all the year round. Within sight of the sea, though under the line, you have a mountain topped with ice, so that you may absolutely choose your temperature, and enjoy the vegetable luxuries of all countries. If I go thither, it will be to do a little business in the way of my trade—to draw up a body of laws for the people there."

The philosophic radicals were, indeed, prepared to establish utopias everywhere, from Bentham, who was ready to set it going in Mexico under Lieutenant-Colonel Burr, to William Allen, the disciple, who proposed to establish it at home by "covering England with establishments in each of which a thousand children should receive, in squads of ten, instruction from a hundred monitors, at the cost of five shillings per head per year."

* * *

The theorists, however, it is well to remember, usually have a reciprocal contempt for "that insidious and crafty

animal"—to quote Adam Smith—"vulgarly called a statesman or politician, whose counsels are directed by the momentary fluctuations of affairs." And certainly that extraordinary political-philosophical spider Bentham, sitting in the centre of the utilitarian web and spinning his interminable systems and theories, in the end succeeded in enmeshing the politicians, and had an immense influence upon the history of the nineteenth century. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" has lost its charm and efficacy as the fundamental principle of political progress, and it is difficult for us now to realize how revolutionary its application was in a society like that in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the habit of every generation to belittle the great political principles which its predecessors thought erroneously to be the alpha and omega of political salvation is itself an error in political and historical perspective. No doubt the principle of utilitarianism, like the theory of "natural rights" which it superseded, had its weaknesses and its limitations, and both contained an element of demonstrable falsity or contradiction. But each not only had an immense practical influence upon the evolution of society; they also contained an element of profound and revolutionary political wisdom which the world is still waiting for the politicians to translate into actualities. The rights of man, as understood by the eighteenth-century revolutionists and the Declaration of American Independence, may be a mirage, but there is a sense in which it may be said that no modern society can be considered civilized unless it assumes the existence of such rights. The principle of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" may, when actually placed in the hands of that insidious and crafty animal, the statesman, prove a key which opens very few political and economic locks, but there is no doubt that it, too, insists upon an aspect of human affairs which no civilized society can ignore. It was an aspect which did not exist at all for the *ancien régime*. M. Halévy notes that when Bentham wrote: "The happiness of the worst man of the species is as much an integrant part of the whole mass of human happiness as is that of the best man," he was saying something which was, to his contemporaries, little known and rather shocking. The idea was revolutionary, not only because it made the happiness of a bad man and of a low man politically important, not only because it established the fact that the first duty of a Government was to ensure the happiness of the whole community, but also because it was contradictory of a conception of society in which the happiness of common men had no political claims against property and privilege.

* * *

M. Halévy's concern is to trace the growth of Philosophic Radicalism, not to describe its political effects. But at the end of his book he gives a rapid survey of the influence of the Benthamites. Their political record is impressive. They played, of course, a great part in establishing the system of Free Trade and *laissez-faire*. M. Halévy notices the paradox that Bentham's disciples played, too, a large part in founding the new British Colonial Empire, e.g., in Australia and Canada. Peel's reform of the Criminal Law in 1823 was borrowed from a Benthamite. The revision of the Criminal Laws in 1833 and the reorganization of the judicial system were directly due to utilitarian influence. Finally, the success of the electoral reform agitation was largely due to the radicals.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

INTRODUCTION TO GOETHE

Goethe and Faust: An Interpretation. By F. MELIAN STAWELL and G. LOWES DICKINSON. (Bell. 15s.)

Goethe's Faust. Translated by ANNA SWANWICK, LL.D. Bohn's Library. (Bell. 2s.)

It is a pity that the first of these books should have to be offered for sale at fifteen shillings. I know quite well the size of the public and the costs of production; under present conditions no publisher would launch such a book at a lower price. But the authors express the desire to "extend, in this country, the circle, still too narrow, of those who are interested in Goethe and his work"; and the persons among whom it is worth while to extend that interest will be mostly young and impecunious. We can only hope for a run on the lending libraries, or a wave of American enthusiasm, so that the publishers may be able to produce the book later at a lower price. For the authors know their subject with scholarship and zeal; they have not made their book in a hurry; and it introduces a study which really needs introduction.

The book is an introduction to Goethe through Faust, and an introduction to Faust by an ingenious mixture of commentary and translation. The translations are so good that I at first regretted that Miss Stawell and Mr. Dickinson had not made two volumes, one the commentary and the other the complete translation of Faust which they say they have written. But a glance at Miss Swanwick's translation, excellent for its period (1850-78) convinced me that their method was the best for their purpose. Only earnest devotion to self-improvement could carry one through some of the dreary wastes in the second part of Faust; only the beauty of the verse makes it possible. There are large quantities of the Second Part which not the best of translations could make palatable. I hope that the Stawell-Dickinson translation will eventually appear; but when it does, its readers should reread the present volume first.

As the authors of this book are perfectly aware, Goethe, the object of passionate adoration to mid-Victorians, is at present in eclipse. It is highly desirable that he should again be admired and studied. But it is not merely a question of reviving a reputation; it is, at least in England and America, a matter almost of establishing a new one, so completely must critical opinion be revised. There have been good biographies, but for pure literary criticism, I suspect that we must wait for another generation to find the knowledge and understanding. That is not altogether our fault; the decline of interest in Goethe was an inevitable moment of history; and is connected with the reasons for which he is a writer of permanent greatness. Goethe is, as Mr. Santayana made clear in an essay which is the nearest approach to a new critical opinion that I know, a philosophical poet. His philosophy, unfortunately, is that which the nineteenth century took up with, and it has therefore become too familiar to us in popular or degraded forms. Love, Nature, God, Man, Science, Progress: the post-Goethe versions of these terms are still current. But they are gradually being replaced; and as they are replaced, we shall be able to see Goethe more clearly and with more admiration.

It might be excessive to say that we cannot understand the nineteenth century without knowing Goethe; but it may be true to say that we cannot understand that century until we are able to understand Goethe. And perhaps the best way to understand many of the ideas of the nineteenth century is to go back behind them, to the man who expressed them best, and in whom they were fresh and new and enthusiastic. It is a useful exercise, for instance, to try to catch the original spirit of a passage like the following, which the present book quotes:—

"Nature! We are surrounded by her, engulfed in her. . . . She creates fresh forms for ever; what is now, has never been before; what was, never comes back again—everything is new and yet still the old. . . . each of her works has a being of its own, each manifestation is a unique conception, and yet they all make one. . . . Every moment she begins an unending race, and every moment she is at the goal. . . . She has neither speech nor language; but she creates hearts and voices, and in them she feels and speaks. Love is her crown. . . ."

On me this falls as dismal as a rural sermon. But it once had meaning, and it will have meaning again; not the meaning of something believed in, but the meaning of something which was once believed. What remains is the fact that Goethe said many such things better than anyone else has said them, and, indeed, thought and felt them better than anyone else has thought or felt them. If a passage like the foregoing seems to us to be nonsense, read the "Conversations with Eckermann," in which is wisdom that every generation must respect. It would be a delusion to think that we can isolate the poetry of Goethe from his ideas; we cannot understand his feeling without taking his thought seriously.

Miss Stawell and Mr. Dickinson have not attempted a critical revision of Goethe. Their book is an introduction, and they have done well to keep it so. There could be no better introduction to Faust. I applaud their attempt to revive interest in Goethe, not because I enjoy him, but because I wish I could do so, and because I regard my inability as an unfortunate limitation and prejudice. I cannot enjoy the Second Part of Faust, and to my mind the climax is an anti-climax. But if you do not enjoy it, you remain rather miserable because you do not. And this is not because it is a poem with a great reputation, and Goethe a poet with a greater reputation than that of any other poet in the two centuries in which he lived, but because one cannot escape the authentic feeling of greatness there.

The translations, as I said above, are wholly admirable, and really give some sensation of the original.

T. S. ELIOT.

"ASIA, ASIA!"

The Desert Road to Turkestan. By OWEN LATTIMORE, F.R.G.S. (Methuen, 21s.)

Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan. By ALBERT VON LE COQ. Translated by ANNA BARWELL. (Allen & Unwin, 18s.)

Arabia of the Wahhabis. By H. ST. J. B. PHILBY. (Constable, 31s. 6d.)

A DEGREE of impertinence attaches, always, to the reviewing of a certain type of books of travel. Books of travel are not, as a rule, written by people whose primary occupation in life is literature. People do not, as a rule, travel because they want to write books; they write books because they have travelled. They endure discomforts from which most of us would very reasonably shrink; at the expense of personal hardship they laboriously add something to the sum of our geographical, ethnological, or archaeological knowledge; they, the travellers, are then impelled to set it down in print; we, the reviewers, are then impelled to criticize it from the point of view of literature. Something is wrong somewhere. And what is wrong is the decline of English prose. Once—in the seventeenth century especially—English prose was almost a birthright; no one familiar with Hakluyt needs to be reminded of this. There was grandeur, a directness, and a magniloquence, which to-day seem to have shrivelled in fright out of the language. The rainbow, crystal source has apparently dried up; and in its place we have English "from our special correspondent," or from a pupil of Mr. Kipling. It is idle to say that the facility of travel has produced this result; anyone who has travelled in the remoter parts of Asia knows that conditions there are just as slow and as primitive for him as they were for Marco Polo or Benedict Goes; it is not Asia, but Europe, which has been his undoing. So when he comes home, after his hardships, to write of Asia, it is in European style that he writes. He knows too much. He is begotten of the European, or it may be the American, Press. He escaped it while he was with his caravan, but when he sits down at home to embalm his experience in print, he becomes a professional mortician: the corpse grins indeed, but with a set smile; has a flush on the cheeks, but it is the flush of cosmetics, aping the colours of life; yet life once glowed there, and some faint colour comes through; some echo of vitality which earns our respect.

Thus Mr. Lattimore begins his book, "No one knows the beginning of the caravan traffic from China into Mongolia and what is now Chinese Central Asia; but since its beginning men have taken out the manufactures and silk

of China, and brought back the pelts of wild animals and gold dust and jade. The origins of this trade are obscured by the wars and conquests which crowded along the same primal and inevitable routes. Whenever the barbaric tribes of Central Asia were strong enough, they swarmed about the western and northern borders of China occupying broad lands and establishing kingdoms and dynasties." The first part of this quotation may pass muster; but the second part—perhaps because the style, as it rolls on, grows more familiar—indicates all too clearly what is to follow. The Press; Mr. Kipling; the Bible; those are the progenitors; what a pity that Mr. Lattimore should ever have been taught to read. He should have been taught to write—to travel on rare and difficult routes he had no need to be taught—but, like those writers of shorthand who cannot decipher the shorthand of other people, he should never have learnt the printed word. Then he might have written down his journey in unparented English which would have been a fresh pleasure to read. But here is the reviewer criticizing the traveller from his own point of view—the point of view of literature. Literature and travel are two separate activities, which once met and merged, but which have now decided, it seems, to go by different roads. We must, it seems, read travel-books for the sake of the journey they record, irrespective of the manner in which they are written; and, travel being regarded as travel, Mr. Lattimore's fifteen hundred miles from Kuei-hua to Ku Ch'eng-tze are worth more in endurance than three hundred pages of mere print.

"Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan," on the other hand, is a serious book which gives an account of the second and third of the four expeditions dispatched by the National Ethnological Museum of Berlin to the little known region which on the north is bounded by Siberia, on the west by Russia and Afghanistan, on the south by Kashmir and Tibet, on the east by China. The many photographs give an adequate idea of this landscape of Central Asia, with its oases, its deserts, its rocks and defiles; the text supplements the deficiencies of the camera:—

"The spurs of the great mountain ranges are covered by desolate waste lands. The rocks are often split asunder by the frequent earthquakes and heaped on one another in the most fantastic shapes; not a tree, not a shrub as far as eye can reach, not a drop of water, and in many places not a trace of animal life."

It is not, however, for descriptions of scenery that one reads this record of difficult and often dangerous excavation. It is, rather, for the interest of the link supplied between Buddhistic and Hellenic art. No one who has visited the Ethnological Museum in Berlin and has seen the superb exhibition of frescoes and sculptures which are the fruits of these four expeditions—no one, indeed, who looks at the plates illustrating the book—can fail to be struck by the combination of Greek and Asiatic influences. In some examples the meeting is obvious: you have the torso, draped in the clinging Hellenic folds, surmounted by a frankly Mongolian head; in others the difference is queerer and more subtle: a trio of heads from Khocho, for instance; at first sight, you might set them down as Greek; you look again, and discern in the coils of the hair, in the slant of the eyes, in the flight of the eyebrow, something which whispers "Asia, Asia." That headless torso of Buddha is as Greek as the Winged Victory; but, were the head not missing, you may be sure you would find in it the cruel, sly, Asiatic obliquity. Still more strange and more suggestive are the three pairs of legs protruding from a wall; legs Hellenistically swathed, but with the feet set widely apart at disconcertingly un-Greek angles. The torsos are missing; they would have been Greek too; but what heads would have topped them? Alexander's conquests carried Greek art into Bactria. Buddhism crawled from India northwards over the Hindu Kush. In Turkestan, Hera and Dionysius struck up a clashing companionship with Gautama. Just as in the West, Christianity clashing with pagan art produced the Greco-Christian art, so in the East did the Macedonian invasions produce this bastard Greco-Buddhist art, and "numbers of the relief groups so frequently found in Gandhara, if characteristic Buddhist additions such as figures of Buddha and other Indian gods and saints had been removed, would have represented equally well the carvings on an early Christian sarcophagus."

Indian, be it noted, not Chinese; for although the immense and ancient Empire of China lay to the east, the Chinese influence is to be traced only in such detail as coats of mail or floral ornamentation. The essential bastardy is begotten of Greece, India, and the Turks.

Readers of Mr. Philby's "Heart of Arabia" will not need to be told that his "Arabia of the Wahhabs" is an indispensable addition to the library of any student of Arabian history and customs. It is an account of the last four months of Mr. Philby's mission to Ibn Sa'ud, Emir of Najd, in the summer of 1918, when he accompanied the Emir in his (then) abortive expedition against Ibn Rashid in the strongholds of Hail and Mu'aiwij Baqa'a. "Arabia of the Wahhabs" is thus really the third volume of Mr. Philby's work. It is not only a valuable but also a fascinating book, alike to the expert and to the amateur; a book to buy, not a book to get from the circulating library; a book to set on the shelves between Doughty and Gertrude Bell.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST,

THE PROMISE OF MAY

The Complete Poems of Lord Alfred Douglas (Secker. 10s. 6d.)

Forty-Nine Poems. By W. H. DAVIES. Illustrated by JACYNTH PARSONS. (Medici Society. 8s. 6d.)

Ezra Pound: Selected Poems. Edited by T. S. ELIOT. (Faber & Gwyer. 7s. 6d.)

Invocations to Angels. By EDGELL RICKWORD. (Wishart. 5s.)

Trivial Breath. By ELINOR WYLIE. (Knopf. 7s. 6d.)

The Buck in the Snow. By EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY. (Harpers. 5s.)

Love as Love, Death as Death. By LAURA RIDING. (Hammer-smith: Seizin Press.)

Oxford Poetry, 1928. Edited by CLERE PARSONS and B. B. (Blackwell. 3s. 6d.)

The catalogue above is a distinguished one, and the volumes in it would furnish matter for a defence of poetry in recent years, and a reminder that there is room for various styles, even in verse. We hear the complaint on the one hand that



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the older serenity is deadly dull, and on the other that the new complexity is outrageous nonsense; but in fact we ought to be pleased with the range of poetry now being produced by fine personalities in their own ways. The volume of that ever-welcome annual "Oxford Poetry" opens with an appeal to the reviewer to take notice, and offer advice; the reviewer, roused from senile decay, looks timidly into the pages, and sees some new spirits pursuing Eliot, and others Sacheverell Sitwell, and others Wordsworth, and sees no reason why they should not. There is a natural affinity of voices as of minds. The only advice is: Remember the British Museum. It has acquired a very large number of poetry-books. Properly thought upon, this may help in the awkward movement when a man feels poetical, but has nothing special to say.

Times, and mechanical arrangements, and dancing, and metre have altered since Lord Alfred Douglas began writing verse. We have seen the hobble skirt disappear, and the capital letter at the beginning of lines of poetry seems in danger. Lord Alfred, being armed with musical and æsthetic and emotional understanding, can still add fine sonnets to those which have long been selected for anthologies. A fine sonnet in 1928 is not the worse poem for being a sonnet. Some things, moods, and characters are fitly reflected in that sort of mirror. Lord Alfred has always known his own business as a poet, and begins his lines with a capital letter, and punctuates them, and uses rhymes. Besides his collected pieces, which justify his devotion, he gives us a preface on the nature of poetry—but he will have none of "the anti-formal heresy."

The numerous lively and fresh images of Mr. Davies and the spring-song of all his work are a beautiful holiday from too much poetic anxiety, and in his clearness of phrase the heavens are reflected; then it is promising when a young artist with so pretty a fancy as Miss Parson's joins forces with him, and the promise is not thrown away. The best of Miss Parson's vignettes are like sunbeams and summer showers; we cannot use other terms for pleasures so natural and refreshing. Mr. Davies has shown us where the wild thyme blows; Miss Parson's reawakens the happy discovery.

After this zephyr, the atmosphere of Mr. Pound's poems is a little mournful. "The algae and the tentacles of the soul," however, become aware of the capricious force in Mr. Pound's accumulation of modernisms. In an introductory paper rich with shrewd decisions on content and form, influence, and originality, Mr. Eliot defines his poetic work. For us, it chiefly consists of table-talk, and brilliant table-talk, too; but we should never be surprised to see Mr. Pound collect his scattered graces into one great and singing poem, unembarrassed by temporary sarcasms and specialist allusions.

We have wished to see the powers of Mr. Edgell Rickword, his subtle thought and secret emotion and original reading, establish themselves in his verse. We desired to find the light of true energy adding the final charm to his expression; it seems to be the nature of mankind to prefer light to shadow. For beauty and individuality of idea, the opening poem of his new collection, "Terminology," challenges any recent poetry; but—we are trying to name our riddle—it lacks a certain radiance "which our first poets had." He wins it in such an interrogation as that in *Covent Garden*:—

"What messages are these the morning brings
My angry city from kind-bosomed fields?"

A season of such moments, and all that wealth of psychological and sociological understanding in Mr. Rickword would shine abroad. But a reviewer cannot presume with his farthing candle to guide a writer of that speculative inconsistency and unborrowed style. For scale of vision, and grim wit, and various verse, he may direct the reader to the masque called "The Happy New Year" at the end of Mr. Rickword's book.

Three American poetesses must now forgive us for our brevity. Mrs. Wylie delights in the relics of romance, and a manner of verse which suggests the elaborate designs of old craftsmen, on:—

"The clock with a print of the Flying Castle,
The singing-bird clock that came from Basel;
Bonaparte's clock, with the bees worn shabby;
And the clock with the voice of an English abbey."

Miss Millay retains, indeed increases, her exquisitely fine power of picture material and spiritual; her world is "like a scene cut in cameo," but suddenly with her questions or reflections she gives it all the mystery of a world in which one's most sensitive associations are alive for ever. But her "reactions" may be simple; at least, we follow them. We are not always able to follow those of Miss Riding, whose idiom is enigmatical:—

"A ten years' out-of-mind pains ten times now,
But ten-times-now's a tenth the sorrow
Of ten years' out-of-mind of now."

Miss Riding watches and records these inner phenomena with impressive seriousness, and as we have previously learned the enigmas of poetry by patience and luck, we propose to "study to know her better," and to enjoy her discriminations and art, with the help of time.

E. B.

THE DREAM AND THE DEED

Octavia Hill: Early Ideals. From Letters edited by EMILY SOUTHWOOD MAURICE. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-ROUCH has said that man has a "perennial and pathetic curiosity about virtue," and that "our best biographies are all of men and women of character—and, it may be added, of beautiful character." Among the most beautiful characters of the last century was Octavia Hill, and the record of her career by C. Edmund Maurice holds high rank in modern biographical literature. To that work the present volume forms an appendix—or, rather, a foreword. Since the issue of the "Life and Letters," further correspondence of Octavia Hill, written during her earlier period, has come into the hands of Mrs. Edmund Maurice, her sister; and that correspondence, now published, throws new light upon the formation of a remarkable personality.

Most of the letters in the first part of the book, representing Octavia's late teens and early twenties, are addressed to Mary Harris, a sympathetic Quaker friend. They show an amazing precocity of outlook and maturity of expression. There is something almost repellent at first to the modern mind in this girl who could write at such length, and in such gravely polished phrases, about God and the ultimate realities. A total absence of humour heightens, to begin with, the impression of priggishness. Almost the only evidence of the writer's youth is her extreme hero-worship of F. D. Maurice and Ruskin, two of the moulding influences of her life. But, as we read on, the sincerity of her style, aided by our own sense of historical perspective, wins our interest and admiration. The young Octavia may have been solemn: she belonged to an age that took itself solemnly. But she was quite unaffected. She had the faculty of losing all but her spiritual self in a vision or a cause; and, if she lacked humour, she had a keen joy in life—especially, at first, in nature and art.

It was her love of nature and art that made her a social reformer. She began by worshipping beauty for its own sake; but she was too large-hearted to be able to enjoy it alone. Thus, beauty for her became duty; and dawns and sunsets and pictures inspired her to start her housing and educative schemes for the working classes. In these experiments she was aided financially by Ruskin, with whom she enjoyed a peculiarly intimate friendship. Some of Ruskin's letters to her, now printed for the first time, vividly reflect his melancholy and the tragedy of his domestic life. Octavia's serene optimism sometimes annoyed, even while it helped, him; and the two friends, though they remained on cordial terms, diverged increasingly in outlook. While he continued to help her with money, Ruskin came to regard Octavia's slum activities as a mere palliative. "While your work is only mitigating of mortal pain," he wrote, "mine is radically curative. London is as utterly doomed as Gomorrah; that is no reason why you should not open a window, or bring a field to give a moment longer breath to her plague-stricken children, but I have to labour wholly to fence round fresh fields beyond the smoke of her torment." Octavia, on the other hand, reiterates in the later letters in this volume, which carries us on to her thirty-seventh year, her growing "contempt for words, except when used by a

poet such as Ruskin." She, living among the poor and for the poor, had become a practical poet; and, while Ruskin's New Jerusalem has not materialized, her pioneer sowing has yielded a visible and abundant harvest of social amelioration.

Yet without the dreamer to inspire, there might not have been the labourer to work. Many of Ruskin's theories may now be discredited. But this volume adds another testimony to the driving force with which he supplied minds more executive than his own.

KEATS'S SHAKESPEARE

Keats's Shakespeare. A Descriptive Study based on new material. By CAROLINE F. E. SPURGEON. (Oxford University Press. 25s.)

THIS is a curious production. It is the most overt exhibition of the Keats cult that has yet appeared. The books written by Miss Amy Lowell and Mr. Middleton Murry make gospel and theology; but Dr. Spurgeon gives us exegesis. An edition of Shakespeare's Works that was once in the possession of Keats, and is now in the library of an American millionaire, is pounced upon "one fine morning" by a priestess of the cult, and the result is this substantial-seeming volume. Keats, like all emotional people, freely marked the passages that moved him most; some of the plays, like the "Tempest," are heavily scored with underlines. There are practically no annotations or marginalia, except some scornful jeers at Johnson's impassive prefaces, so the interest of this "new material" is entirely confined to the discerning of Keats's line-by-line reactions to Shakespeare's plays. We now know for certain what we might have only guessed before: that Keats admired all the passages we should expect him to admire. The lines most heavily scored are naturally those most like Keats's own poetry:—

"Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
The clouds, methought, would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me; that, when I wak'd,
I cry'd to dream again."

It is more interesting to note the passages which Keats neglected, though they, too, could have been forecasted. He read most often and found most to admire in the "Tempest" and "Midsummer Night's Dream." The historical plays are scarcely marked at all. Everywhere Keats's romantic interest is obvious.

Keats had very profound perceptions about the art of poetry. He was acutely sensitive to its variations—too sensitive to be a perfect poet. He found so much emotional satisfaction in other poets, particularly in Shakespeare, that he never felt impelled to bank up his own emotions, which is the true disposition for any sincere form of poetic activity. Authentic poetry is a direct relation between the poet and his experience; and though another poet's poetry may be as much a part of experience as the normal joys and sorrows of life, it is nevertheless a vicarious interpretation, and must be kept distinct by the active poet. Unless a poet is capable of saying to himself: Yes, that is Shakespeare, over there, and wonderful he is, to contemplate; but here am I, washed up on another shore;—unless a poet can discriminate between his own and other people's emotions in this manner, he is lost. Shakespeare is so universal that he absorbs any lesser poet who probes too deeply into his spirit and mode of expression. Keats suffered in this way, both from Shakespeare and from Milton, as well as from lesser poets. It is only towards the end that we find signs of an approaching freedom.

It is not for us to question the propriety of publishing this volume. All facts of any value should be made accessible, and undoubtedly the scorings which Keats made in an edition of Shakespeare have some value for the specialists in literature. It is merely a question of relative values, and of priority. The care and expense devoted to this volume might more profitably have been spent on a cheap and satisfactory edition of Keats's Letters.

WAGES

Wages. By MAURICE DOBB. (Nisbet, and Cambridge University Press. 5s.)

IN economics to-day "traditional treatments and traditional solutions are being questioned, improved, and revised. In the end this activity of research should clear up controversy. But for the moment controversy and doubt are increased." So writes Mr. Keynes in his revised preface to the Cambridge Economic Handbooks, of which the sixth is before me. This prologue is specially apt, both to Mr. Maurice Dobb and to the topic of "Wages." Mr. Dobb, more than most economists, is a questioner, an improver, and a reviser. In both his previous books he has shown new angles of approach to old problems. He has, too, a wider experience and a better understanding than some academic writers of certain significant sections of extra-mural opinion. "Wages," moreover, has become one of the least satisfactory chapters in the traditional text-book. The facts seem to recede further and further from the theory. The first approximations of the ancients were evidently much rougher than they knew. Thus there has recently been keen competition to discover new truth in this field. A long bookshelf could be filled with the writings of the last few years on wages.

Intelligent readers will, I think, lay down Mr. Dobb's book, stimulated but still puzzled. He has handled ideas with skill, but he has not yet woven them into a perfect pattern. One of his sources of strength is his sense of the importance of institutions, and of the fact that their influence is apt, to use a favourite word of Marshall's, to be "cumulative." The modern "wage-system" was not spontaneously generated, nor can its continuance without essential change be taken for granted. At the present time, in this country at any rate, there are three facts, for which any adequate theory of wages must allow. The first is the persistence of unemployment on a great scale; the second is the high, and perhaps increasing, degree of immobility of labour, both between places and occupations; the third is the tendency, with Employers' Associations and Trade Unions both highly organized, towards bilateral monopoly as the basis of wage determination. The first and second of those facts are closely connected. Unemployment is largely due to a maldistribution of labour between places and occupations. Its obstinate continuance is largely due to immobility. If more mobility is desired, it must, under modern conditions, like most other desirable things, be deliberately organized and paid for. It cannot be trusted to "come about of itself" within the lifetime of those primarily concerned. The third fact is also connected with the first. Price, under bilateral monopoly, is indeterminate within certain limits. There is no one "point of equilibrium," but a series of possible points. But to each possible point at which wages may be adjusted there is, at any given time, a corresponding volume of unemployment.

Mr. Dobb might, I think, have thrown such facts as these into clearer relief. His argument is not always well arranged. Some of his remarks on "Relative Wages," in Chapter II., and on the effects of inventions in Chapter IV., belong rather to a general discussion on Distribution, on which, rather surprisingly, no Handbook in the Cambridge series has yet appeared. The influence of Trade Unionism, again, is not explicitly raised till the last chapter but one, though it is highly relevant to the earlier chapters on "Theories of Wages" and "Wages and Bargaining Power," and is hinted at in both. This latter chapter is one of the most interesting in the book. Does Trade-Union pressure for higher wages and other improvements in wage-earners' conditions exercise a dynamic influence, permanently altering the "equilibrium" of the future in favour of the wage-earner, or does such pressure, if it goes beyond the possibilities of the moment, merely defeat its own purpose? This is a most important question. Mr. Dobb classes Mr. Lionel Robbins and Mr. H. D. Henderson, who incline towards the latter opinion, with Mrs. Marcet. But he himself is much less bold in asserting the contrary view than is Mr. J. W. F. Rowe in his recent book on "Wages in Practice and Theory." For, whereas Mr. Rowe regards Trade-Union pressure as one of the chief causes of industrial progress, and its absence as a frequent explanation of the mental torpor of

employers, Mr. Dobb admits only to "a halting agnosticism" which at least "may be nearer to wisdom than the dogmatic predictions of the classical economists."

Mr. Dobb believes that the continuance of "the wage-system" in its present form depends upon its future fruits. If real wages rise, this system, with only minor changes, is more likely to be generally acceptable; if they stagnate or fall, it may be sunk by storms. Perhaps this expectation is too simple. Whipped dogs make poor rebels. And was it not Mr. Keynes who said, looking back in the early years of the present depression to the truculent high hopes of Trade Unionism in the post-war boom, that "it is prosperity, not adversity, which makes the slave shake his chains"? Rising real wages, coupled with increasing leisure, education, and consciousness of political power, would, I think, be a strong combination of forces making for peaceful, but far-reaching, change. For violent change, on the other hand, another large-scale war is probably a necessary condition. But this is a price which only a scoundrel or a madman would be willing to pay.

HUGH DALTON.

ALL ABOUT CHINA

Chinese Political Thought. By ELBERT DUNCAN THOMAS. (Williams & Norgate. 18s.)

Foreign Diplomacy in China, 1894-1900. By PHILIP JOSEPH. (Allen & Unwin. 16s.)

The Chinese Revolution, 1926-27. By H. OWEN CHAPMAN. (Constable. 12s.)

The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution. By T. C. WOO. (Allen & Unwin. 15s.)

The Foundations of Modern China. By T'ANG LEANG-LI. (Noel Douglas. 12s. 6d.)

EVEN the most ardent students of contemporary foreign politics find China an almost insoluble problem. The difficulty is, of course, to get even a glimmering of understanding of the fundamental position. To those who do wish to understand it we can confidently prescribe a serious reading of these five books. They are all, in their way, extremely good, and, taken together, they give one a conspectus of the existing situation and the history preceding it which is really remarkable.

Dr. Thomas's book is, perhaps, not essential, and the very practical minded may do well to pass it over. But it is so interesting that no one concerned with the theory of politics should miss reading it. The comfortable theory that only in Europe have men paid attention to the science of government (as opposed to the art) has resulted in complete ignorance of Asiatic speculations. Dr. Thomas therefore practically breaks new ground in his study of Chinese political thought in the Chou Period, 1122-249 B.C. How closely that thought was connected with the actual development of the Chinese Empire may be seen in the fact, noted by Dr. Thomas, that the organization of the Wai-Wu-Pu, the Chinese Foreign Office, in 1901 marked a complete break with the conception of the Chinese State as it had existed for some two or three thousand years.

Mr. Joseph's book deals with history, and is of a type not uncommon. It is an extremely able and well-documented study of the political and economic relations of China with foreign Powers during the crucial years 1894 to 1900. A knowledge of the facts given by him is essential to any real understanding of subsequent happenings. The three other books are concerned primarily with those subsequent happenings and with the Revolution. Two are by Chinese who have themselves played a part in public affairs, T'ang Leang-Li being Chairman of the Nationalist Government from 1925 to 1927, and T. C. Woo head of the Diplomatic Affairs Department at Hankow. The first writes a very interesting book, which will give the reader a clear idea of the general outlook of the Chinese Nationalists, while the latter enters much more into the detailed history of the last few years. His book is particularly valuable for the light which it throws upon the relations between the Nationalist and Communist parties. The same is true of Mr. Chapman's book in which he gives an account—he was

an eye-witness—of events from the invasion of Central China in 1926 to the end of the Communist control of the Nationalist Government.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

An Introduction to Tooke and Newmarch's "A History of Prices from 1792 to 1856." By PROFESSOR T. E. GREGORY, D.Sc. (King. 2s. 6d.)

A re-issue of Tooke and Newmarch's great work is welcome, and the price of four guineas for the four volumes is probably not unreasonable. Second-hand copies have long been practically unobtainable. Professor Gregory has supplied an introduction, which is also published separately in a small paper-covered volume. This is only fair to Professor Gregory, whose careful and penetrating essay deserves to reach a public beyond those who can afford the four guineas, but it is disappointing for the reviewer, who hoped to be allowed to peruse, and perhaps possess, a complete set. As a history of prices, Tooke's work is, as Professor Gregory points out, unsatisfactory. The choice of commodities is not sufficiently representative of British products, and there is no attempt to make any use of index numbers or ratios. As a polemic on banking theory set in an historical mould, it is of the greatest importance. It covers the exciting experimental period of Restoration and Resumption, and "modern monetary theory was born of these events." It covers also the discussions preceding and following the Act of 1844, and Professor Gregory gives more space to analysis of the theories current after Resumption than to those current during the days of the paper pound. Historians will probably feel that they get less help than they had expected in examining the influence of monetary policy on economic conditions during the first twenty years of the Peace. But this essay is not designed for them, but for the monetary theorist, who will be grateful for a most dexterous unravelling of a tangled skein of thought.

The Complete Works of Walter Savage Landor. Vol. IX.—Imaginary Conversations. Edited by T. EARLE WELBY. (Chapman & Hall. 30s.)

This is the ninth volume of Imaginary Conversations in the Complete Edition which is expected to occupy about sixteen volumes. In fact, this volume concludes the Imaginary Conversations proper and includes "The Pentameron."

Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami. Edited by P. S. ALLEN and H. M. ALLEN. Vol. VII. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 38s.)

The seventh volume of this monumental edition contains letters, mostly written by Erasmus from Basle, between the dates March 28th, 1527, and December 30th, 1528. Between twenty and thirty of the letters are printed here for the first time.

THE ANNUAL BOOKS OF REFERENCE

THE Annuals do not decline either in number or in substance. The largest is "The Post Office London Directory with County Suburbs, 1929" (Kelly, 55s.). In its 130th year, this noble veteran now numbers nearly 4,000 pages. It is the model of what a directory of this kind should be.

Then come the "Peerages": "Burke's Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage, 1929" (Five guineas), is in its 87th edition and runs to 3,000 pages. "Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, and Companionage, 1929" (Dean, 75s.), is in its 216th year, and has more than doubled in size during the last fifty years, containing now 3,400 pages. "Kelly's Handbook to the Titled, Landed, and Official Classes, 1929" (30s.), is a smaller book, giving less amount of information about the families of the "Peerage, &c.," but very useful as a book of reference.

Almost every nationality, sect, and profession now has its year-book. Here are a few of them: "The Writers' and Authors' Year-Book, 1929" (A. & C. Black, 3s. 6d.), containing a large amount of information about journals, publishers, &c.; "The Catholic Directory, 1929" (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 3s. 6d.); "The Girls' School Year-Book (Public Schools), 1928" (Deane, 7s. 6d.); "The People's Year-Book" (Co-operative Wholesale Society, 3s.), the annual of the Co-operative Movement.

AUCTION BRIDGE

BY CALIBAN.

THE DOUBLE OF ONE NO-TRUMP

NOTE.—In these articles I shall adopt the usually accepted conventions in setting out illustrative hands. Z and Y are partners against A and B. Z makes the final declaration, and A leads.

NO questions connected with Auction Bridge have been more hotly debated in recent years than those which concern the so-called "American" doubles, in particular the informatory double of One No-Trump. To begin with, some players are against the use of these doubles altogether; to encourage a player to say one thing, when he means another, is, they argue, contrary to the spirit of the game. But as long as conventions can be brought within the framework of the rules, and are open and above-board in themselves, objections of this kind can have no validity. The remedy, if the conventions in question are generally disliked, is clearly the amendment of the rules.

No; the thing that matters, as regards the double of One No-Trump, is not whether it is artistic, but whether it is worth while. Experienced players, who at first adopted it with enthusiasm, have to a large extent abandoned it, and there are many who predict that in course of time it will die a natural death. This is partly, no doubt, because players of moderate discrimination have tended to use it much too freely. But, this consideration apart, the double has shown itself to be less of an asset, to the side making use of it, than was at first supposed. Let us consider, with the aid of one or two examples, how it works out in practice.

Here, to begin with, is a hand in which the double apparently "comes off":—

♠ 10 x x x			
♥ A x			
♦ A J 10 x			
♣ K Q x			
♠ A x x	Y	♠ J x x x	
♥ K x	A B	♥ x x x x	
♦ K Q x x	Z	♦ x x	
♣ A J 10 x		♣ x x x	
	♠ K Q		
	♥ Q J 10 x x		
	♦ x x x		
	♣ x x x		

Score: Game all; AB 10, YZ 0. A deals and bids One No-Trump; Y doubles; B, of course, passes, and Z calls Two Hearts. All pass. A opens with the Knave of Clubs, and YZ make three tricks in Hearts. "A very successful double, partner," says Y complacently.

But is it a "very successful double"? Before answering this question, one should consider, not only what happened under the circumstances of the double, but also what would have happened under other circumstances. And what would have happened is this:—

(1) If Y had passed, instead of doubling A's No-Trump, Z should still have called Two Hearts, and the result of the deal would then have been precisely the same.

(2) If Y, instead of doubling, had called Two No-Trumps over A's One No-Trump, YZ would almost certainly have gone game.

Let us now take a case where, with the same distribution of cards as between A and Y, the double is less successful.

♠ 10 x x x			
♥ A x			
♦ A J 10 x			
♣ K Q x			
♠ A x x	Y	♠ K J x	
♥ K x	A B	♥ x x x x x	
♦ K Q x x	Z	♦ x x	
♣ A J 10 x		♣ x x x	
	♠ Q x x		
	♥ Q J 10 x		
	♦ x x x		
	♣ x x x		

The difference between this hand and the last is that Z has one Heart less, and B one Heart more, and that B has the King of Spades. The score (let us suppose) is as before. A again opens the bidding with One No-Trump; Y doubles; B passes; Z (as in duty bound by the convention) calls Two Hearts. All pass.

A, as before, opens with the Knave of Clubs. YZ make seven tricks, losing 50 points above the line, less 32 Honours—18 points in all. This, they flatter themselves, is not at all a bad result. But note, once again:—

(1) That if Y and Z had both passed, and AB had played the hand in One No-Trump, they would have been at least one down on their contract.

(2) That if Y had called Two No-Trumps, instead of doubling, he would not have been more than one trick down, and might have made his contract. I shall return next week to this aspect of the question.

NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

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THE New Symphony Orchestra, under Sir Landon Ronald, play Tchaikowsky's Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64 (Six 12-in. records D1511-1516. 6s. 6d. each). This is a very good example of orchestral recording. The 4th, 5th, and 6th Symphonies of Tchaikowsky are now all available to the gramophonist. Of these the 5th has claims to be the best, and certainly the first movement is among the best things written by the composer.

All Chopin lovers should get Nocturne in E minor and the Mazurkas in C sharp minor and A minor, played by perhaps the greatest of Chopin players, Pachmann (12-in. record. DB1106. 8s. 6d.).

There are three good vocal records in their different kinds: Galli-Curci singing "La Paloma" and "La Capinera" in which the song is nothing and the voice everything (DA1002. 6s.); Florence Austral and the Royal Opera Chorus singing two famous songs from "The Flying Dutchman," Senta's Ballad and the Spinning Chorus (12-in. record. D1517. 6s. 6d.); and finally, Marguerite d'Alvarez singing as they should be sung "Près des remparts de Séville," from "Carmen," and "Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix," from "Samson et Dalila" (DA1000. 6s.).

COLUMBIA RECORDS

THE Columbia reproduce the two works which shared the first prize for the British zone in their own competition in connection with the Schubert centenary. "Pax Vobiscum" of J. St. A. Johnston is a pleasant piece of orchestral music showing the influence of Mr. Delius (12-in. record. 9564. 4s. 6d.). Two Movements in Symphonic Form, by Frank Merrick, attempts the task of completing Schubert's Unfinished Symphony (Two 12-in. records. 9562-3. 4s. 6d. each). It was an ungrateful task, and Mr. Merrick's Scherzo is mechanical and monotonous, though there is rather better stuff in his other movement.

The Mozart Festival Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter, give a good performance of Schumann's Symphony No. 4 in D minor (Four 12-in. records. L2209-12. Though Schumann is out of fashion and was never at his best in the symphonic form, one welcomes these records, for there he has been little recorded. The recording is admirable.

The most important instrumental record is the Twenty-four Preludes of Chopin, played by the French pianist, Lortat (Four 12-in. records. 9568-9571. 4s. 6d. each.) It is interesting to compare these with the records of Cortot playing the Preludes. Lortat is good, but he never comes near Cortot. The tone of these piano records is excellent. So is that of the two beautiful Bach pieces, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desire" and Gigue from the Fifth French Suite, played by Myra Hess (10-in. record. D1635. 4s. 6d.). Another enjoyable instrumental record is Sonata in F, Adagio and Allegro, of Handel, played on the viola by Lionel Tertis (12-in. record. L2213. 6s. 6d.). Two charming eighteenth-century Italian pieces of Scarlatti and Durante are played by the Madami Quartet, which is said to be a String Quartet, but is certainly not so in the ordinary sense of the words (5143. 3s.).

The best vocal record is "Parmi veder le lacrime" and "Tutte le feste," from "Rigoletto," sung by the soprano Maria Gentile (5147. 3s.).

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A charming special Christmas recording is the Christmas Concerto of Corelli (Two 10-in. records. 10265-6. 4s. 6d. each) played by London Chamber Orchestra conducted by Anthony Bernard. This beautiful piece of seventeenth-century Italian music is beautifully played.

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The Times in its survey of the past year: "In poetry the most notable book was Thomas Hardy's *Last Poems*, and in fiction Mrs. Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*."

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

OVERSEAS LENDING—AMERICAN EXTRAVAGANCE—COPPER—AMERICAN POOLS

A LEADING firm of Stock Exchange brokers, in their monthly review just issued, returns to the prickly subject of Imperial finance. The £10,000,000 loan for India last week and the £7,000,000 cash loan for New Zealand this week are a reminder that the Dominions and Colonies are still taking full advantage of the "preference" that is given them in the London money market. The "preference" stands because it is on the Statute Book. By the Colonial Stock Act of 1900 the loans of Colonial Governments were given, on compliance with certain Treasury formalities, the status of trustee securities, and by an earlier Colonial Stock Act the share warrants and stock certificates to bearer of Colonial Governments escape the 2 per cent. stamp duty imposed on transfers for one of 5s. per cent. These Statutes give the Dominions and Colonies an immense advantage over all other overseas borrowers. By virtue of them the Government of a new country like Southern Rhodesia can raise money at 5 per cent., while Czechoslovakia, which is much more economically developed, has to pay, say, 8 per cent. The question must arise whether the preference extended to Dominion and Colonial loans should be continued if, by reason of our reduced savings, our overseas lending has to be curtailed.

In the brokers' report, which we have cited, there is a statement showing the destination of the capital issues made in this country from 1900 to 1928. It appears that in the eight years ending 1914 the yearly average loans to Dominions and Colonies work out at £69.2 millions, or 44½ per cent. of the total overseas issues, and 29½ per cent. of the total issues, and for the eight years ending 1928 at £75.9 millions, or, allowing for the rise in wholesale prices, at £48 millions a year, which is 64½ per cent. of the overseas issues, and 23 per cent. of the total issues. Capital issues in the public market are not, of course, the whole story—capital being issued privately or saved by public corporations and reinvested—but it is fairly argued that the reorganization and rebuilding of industry at home since the war has entailed a heavy drain on capital—domestic industries taking in the last five years £101.9 millions of new money a year, or £68.5 millions, allowing for the rise in wholesale prices as compared with £33.3 millions before the war; that there must be a period when the full value of our industrial reorganization has not been realized, so that our savings are temporarily diminished; and that it is therefore imperative to pursue a wise policy of overseas lending and exercise discrimination even in Imperial loans. With that view we are in full accord.

But the problem of deciding whether we are, in fact, overlending is exceedingly difficult. In a month's time we shall have the Board of Trade's estimates of the invisible items in our international balance-sheet which give some measure of our national savings. But "the net surplus on income account" bears no relation to the amount we can actually lend overseas in any year. That is a matter of balancing the movements of capital. For instance, we can borrow in the "short" money market and lend on "long term" account—a dangerous proceeding in which we indulge from time to time. Again, we can sell overseas some of our holdings of foreign investments so that the new capital issues may be swollen by the reinvestment of the proceeds of these sales. This is a process which has lately assumed some importance. American penetration into the fields controlled by British capital in Central and South America has resulted in the last six months in the sale of the Chilean and Mexican holdings of the Whitehall Electric Investments and of the British control of Pernambuco Tramways, and the United River Plate Telephone. As the flow of American savings overseas becomes larger and more turbulent, we may next read of control of the Argentine railways passing from Finsbury Circus to Wall Street. Who knows?

This point brings us to the growth in the American purchase of shares in the London market—another important element in the movement of capital to and from this country. Indeed, the courage or madness of American speculators has been the mainstay of markets since the Christmas holidays. Mond Nickels, for example, have soared to 11¼—against 6½ at the end of October. The market has forgotten its disappointment that one share of the International Nickel of New Jersey is to get six shares while one Mond Nickel share is to get only one share in the new holding company—International Nickel of Canada. Weeping may endure for the night but joy comes at three in the afternoon when New York cables carry Mond Nickel shares (the equivalent of the new International Nickel shares) to new records. Graphophone have soared to 17 (i.e., 34 as against 16 before the capital bonus in September), but no American buyer stops to question how a company with earnings last reported at £400,000 a year can hope to justify its market capitalization of £33,751,162, even in five years' time. Again, General Electric shares this week jumped to 3½ before reacting to 2¾, but no American buyer could have stopped to think that this company is paying a dividend of 10 per cent., and not likely to increase it for the present. Before Christmas it was Ford—a new £1 share taken by American buying to £5½. Before Ford, it was Marconi.

Another phase of American ebullition is the purchase of British mining shares, in particular, copper mines. The rise in the price of copper is the first fruits of the second year of control by the Copper Exporters Incorporated. The policy of this world association of copper producers and refiners has been to restrict output of North American mines and reduce stocks of refined copper. There was, in fact, a 50 per cent. drop last year in the reserves of refined copper in the United States, and the supply available in America for distribution to the consuming centres of the world fell to ten days. The output of copper outside North America has been increased, but there is still a dearth of uncontrolled copper. The rise of over £20 a ton in cash standard copper in London since the beginning of 1927—the present price being £75 cash London and 16½ cents a lb. in America—suggests that the Copper Exporters Association has temporarily secured a monopoly. Hence the buying of Rhodesian copper mining shares such as Bwana M'Kubwa, N'Changa, and Roan Antelope. A stimulus to the movement was given by the formation of the Rhodesian Anglo-American Ltd., under the auspices of "Johnnies," the Anglo-American Corporation, "Chartered," Sir Edmund Davis, Mr. Chester Beatty, and the Newmont Mining Corporation of New York. Mr. Chester Beatty, who was once Mr. Hoover's partner, has a big American following.

It is satisfactory to see that American buying has hoisted to 20s. the shares of Burma Corporation, which we recommended in THE NATION of December 8th at 15s. Perhaps the one-time association of the President-Elect with this Corporation (not forgetting the connection of Mr. Chester Beatty) has had something to do with American interest in Burma Corporation shares now quoted on the kerf in New York. We would end on a note of warning about American operations. There are a number of British shares quoted in New York, but whether they rise or fall will depend largely on the operation of American "pools." The skilful "pool" manager first clears off the market the available supply of stock, and then circulates "tips." As the tips spread from New York to the coast and to the Middle West and to California, a buying movement follows in waves, and with the market short of stock the price rises sensationally. By the time Hollywood has heard of the "tip," the pool has probably unloaded, and the market dries up. Then the innocent speculator in Putney or Birmingham and the film star in Hollywood are found together "nursing the baby."

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